

JUNE 1965

Commentary

VOLUME THIRTY-NINE, NUMBER SIX

JOHNSON SO FAR

The Great Society: Robert Lekachman

Civil Rights: Bayard Rustin and Tom Kahn

Foreign Policy: Maurice J. Goldbloom

The American Reading Problem: Selma Fraiberg

"WHAT WAS THE MATTER WITH HENRY ADAMS?": Marcus Cunliffe

NAZI MURDERS & GERMAN POLITICS: David Schoenbaum

THE HOMECOMING OF JOEL BIALYSTOCK—A Story: Deirdre Levinson

JEWS, GENTILES & THE NEW ESTABLISHMENT: Dennis H. Wrong

A FAREWELL TO MUÑOZ MARIN: Keith Botsford

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Richard Poirier

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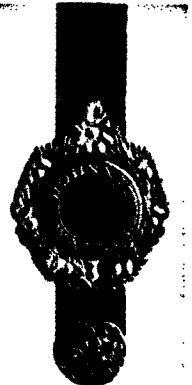
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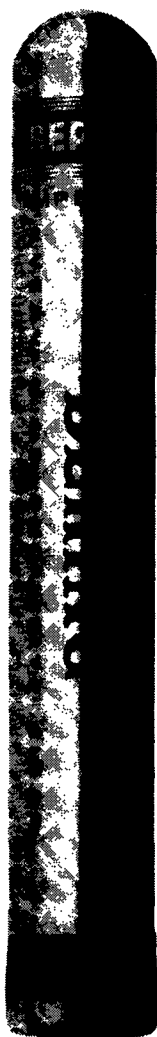
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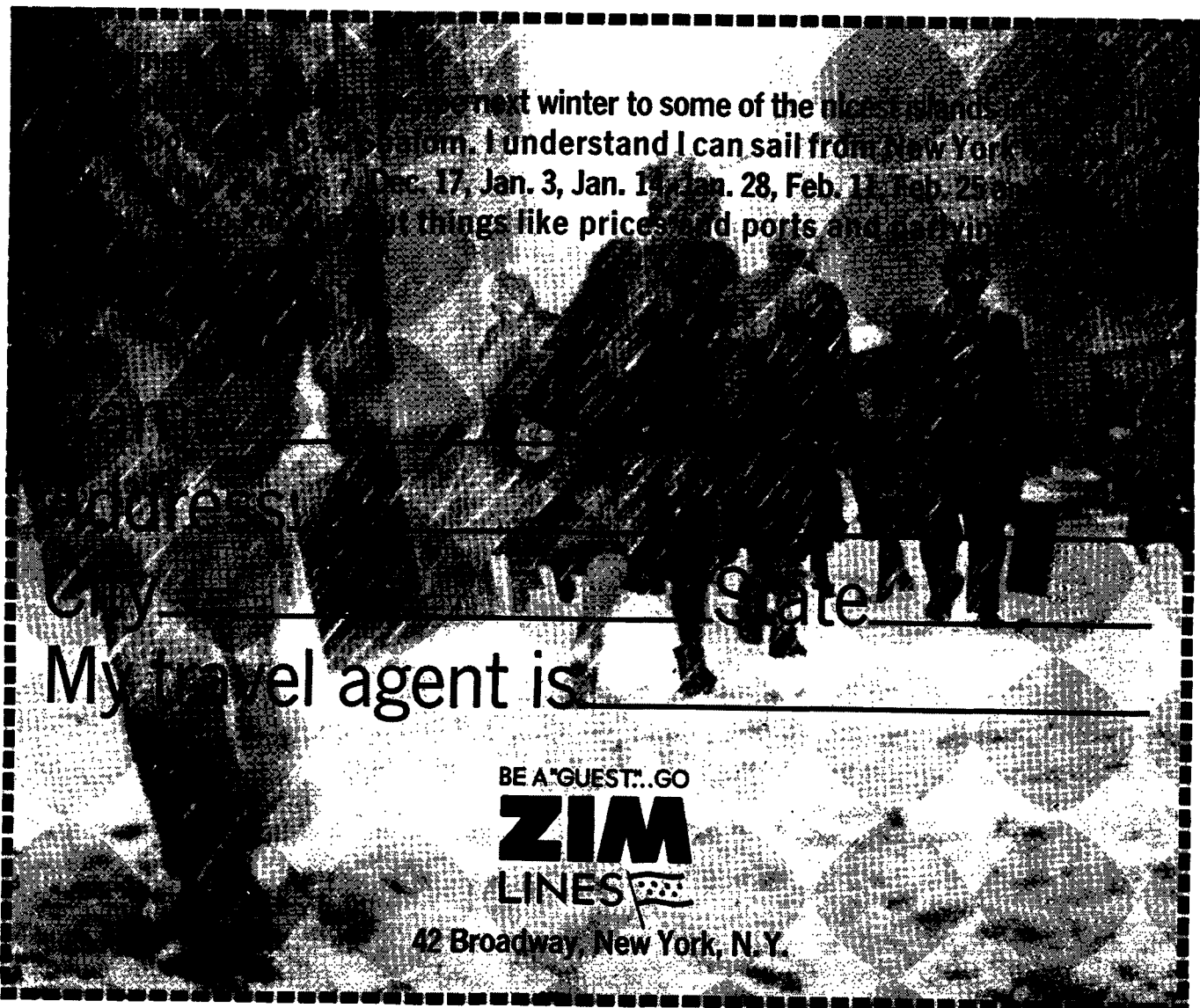
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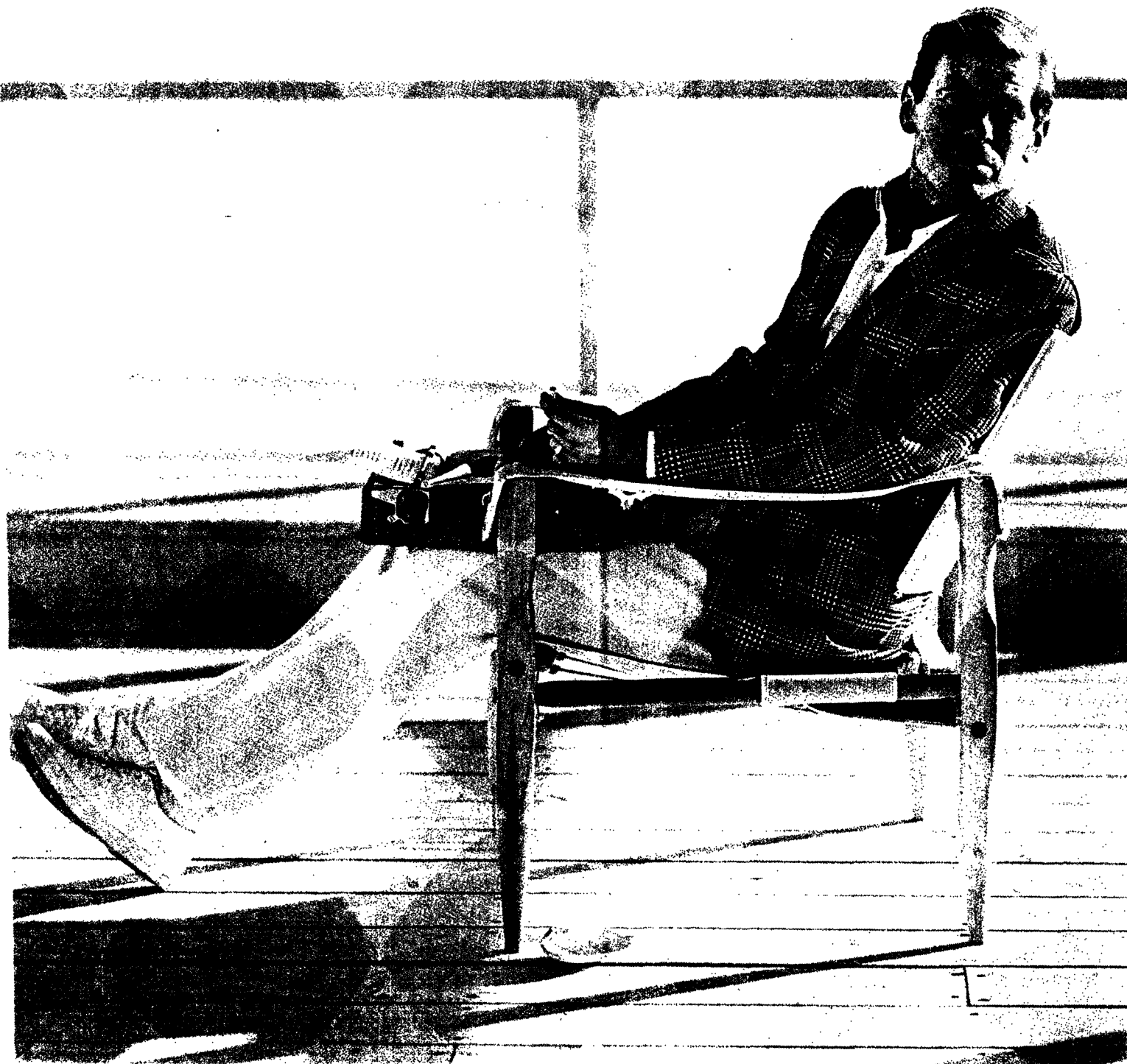
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LETTERS FROM READERS

Negroes & Jews (Contd.)

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

... While Nathan Glazer ["Negroes & Jews: The New Challenge to Pluralism," Dec. '64] concedes that Negroes hold prejudiced attitudes toward Jews, he minimizes the possibility that Jews hold similar attitudes toward Negroes. Inasmuch as a great deal of his argument rests on this basic misconception, perhaps primary attention should be directed to it. In the first place it is sociologically unsound; that is, it ignores the findings of contemporary sociological studies of prejudice. Public opinion pollsters have long demonstrated that anti-Negro prejudice, based on the notion of racism, is part of the normative order in American society, and I fail to understand how Jews, as participating members in this society, are somehow exempt from these attitudes simply by virtue of being Jewish. To assert that the refusal of Jews to rent to Negroes or serve them in department stores is "businesslike" behavior and not a reflection of prejudice is, I think, naïve. Furthermore, to attribute this type of discriminatory behavior on the part of Jews to "businesslike" motives simply serves to perpetuate stereotypic thinking.

As members of a racist society, Jews, like other Americans, have internalized anti-Negro prejudice. The author appears to say that the attitudinal determinants of behavior in this regard are somehow different for Jews than for other Americans. When Negroes engage in "destruction and looting of Jewish businesses" in Northern ghettos, he labels it anti-Semitism. When discriminatory behavior is practiced by Southern white Christians, for example, it is felt to be prompted by prejudice, but for Jews it is something else. ... Though it is true that Jews tend to be less prejudiced toward Negroes than white Christians, prejudice is a relative concept, and to be less prejudiced is not the same thing as being unprejudiced.

The notion of ethnic sub-communities in American society is not without its validity, but I would suggest that antipathy by white Americans (Jews included) to Negro demands for greater civil rights stems more from resistance to social change in the realm of race

relations than it does to the mere breaking up of ethnic sub-communities.

A. PINKNEY

Dept. of Sociology
Hunter College
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Professor Glazer's article is admirable in its statement of facts and events, but the judgment he makes in the last two paragraphs appears to be unwarranted. ...

On the basis of the statements made in the article, there seems no reason to believe that the Negro has any less desire to maintain his own community than has any other group. Others have concentrated their efforts on achieving group benefits without destroying their own character, although necessarily modifying it. Subordinate groups have infiltrated the power structure of the dominant groups by superior intellectual achievement, political effort, economic struggle, and by intra-group self-help. It is hard to believe that the Negroes as a group will not be stimulated in the same way. ...

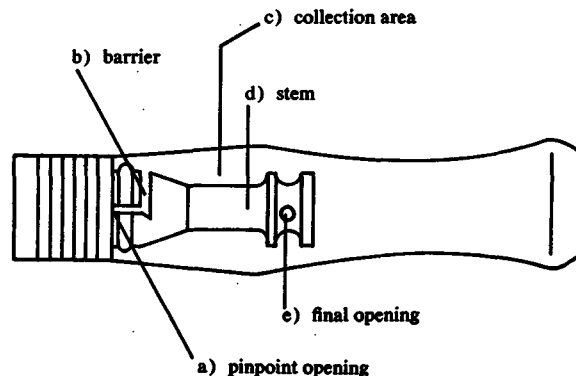
Even while the Negro is striking out in rage and frustration and expressing the "paranoia of persecuted minorities," he maintains a latent pride in his culture which will become more articulate as he becomes more successful. ... I foresee not an "assimilated" society but one in which the Negro community will finally be able to achieve equal power by equal force.

HARRY H. KAUFMAN

Flushing, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

... Mr. Glazer misses completely the real thrust of Negro demands: that Negroes want to end the entrance requirements to middle-class society now based on custom, habit and prejudice, on the color of one's skin. To be sure, this seems, as Mr. Glazer observes, to cut across the spectrum of all sub-communities and, of course, it does. But remember that the Anglo-Saxon white Protestants not long ago saw a similar challenge to all of their sub-communities from the immigrant hordes of non-Nordic nations. And according to Mr. Glazer's lights, the Jewish "invasion" could have been construed as a similarly profound threat. ...



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Mr. Glazer's essay gains force from the implication that the "insertion" of the deprived group, the Negro, into the community of the advantaged, is artificial, while merit and money, the Jewish way, are elements of a natural evolution. Varieties of this attitude have, of course, been used to question demands for a wider sharing of opportunities for generations, including the validity of Jewish demands for equal access to restricted places of residence, education, and money-making. How "natural" was the remarkable Jewish achievement of power and wealth? How would historical analysis show Jewish interest groups operating in campaigns for labor union security, greater public expenditures for social welfare, public health, education, free higher education, public positions of responsibility for Jews, tenement house reform? If Mr. Glazer sees fit to raise... questions of Negro abilities and adaptability to the alien middle-class Jewish world, let him recall the "rudeness, vulgarity, materialism, etc." that were always cited as "attributes of the Jewish character" when Jews hammered at the gates... There is no clear line between the mobile, dynamic, and free American society of the liberal imagination—or "ideology" as Mr. Glazer calls it—and the very real and often conservative, exclusionist group tendencies within that society. The question of the admission of Negroes to full equality and the preservation of group interests and identities is not the either-or question that Mr. Glazer apparently thinks it is when he concludes that realization of Negro demands for equality in fact requires us to "create communities very different from the kinds" we have now.

JEROME ZUKOSKY

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

... It is a pity that Mr. Glazer does not state clearly which Negro demands threaten the pluralism of American society... To my knowledge, no responsible Negro leader challenges the right of Jews, Catholics, or vegetarians to maintain the traditional character of their group life. If Mr. Glazer means that the demand for an end to segregation and discrimination, or specific proposals such as the busing of children out of their neighborhoods to integrated schools would have this effect, he should say so plainly. It appears to me that the tendency of

his article is to attempt to maintain discrimination under the guise of defending the right of various groups to preserve their precious, parochial heritages. This is unfortunate since otherwise there is much in Mr. Glazer's article which would lead one to think that he sees the justice of the Negro cause... As a sociologist, Professor Glazer certainly knows that we need not fear a too rapid advance of the Negro cause or that the Negro minority seeks to endanger the pluralism of American life or could, if it wanted to, achieve this. But Mr. Glazer's article is disturbing, finally, because it seems to be one more indication of the retreat of some Jewish liberals before the civil rights cause. As a faithful reader and sometime contributor, I note this tendency with some dismay. The editors might well consider whether an article like Mr. Glazer's serves any useful purpose in preserving the liberal image of COMMENTARY or the concern for justice and good inter-group relations in which the magazine has done such outstanding service...

CHARLES H. NICHOLS

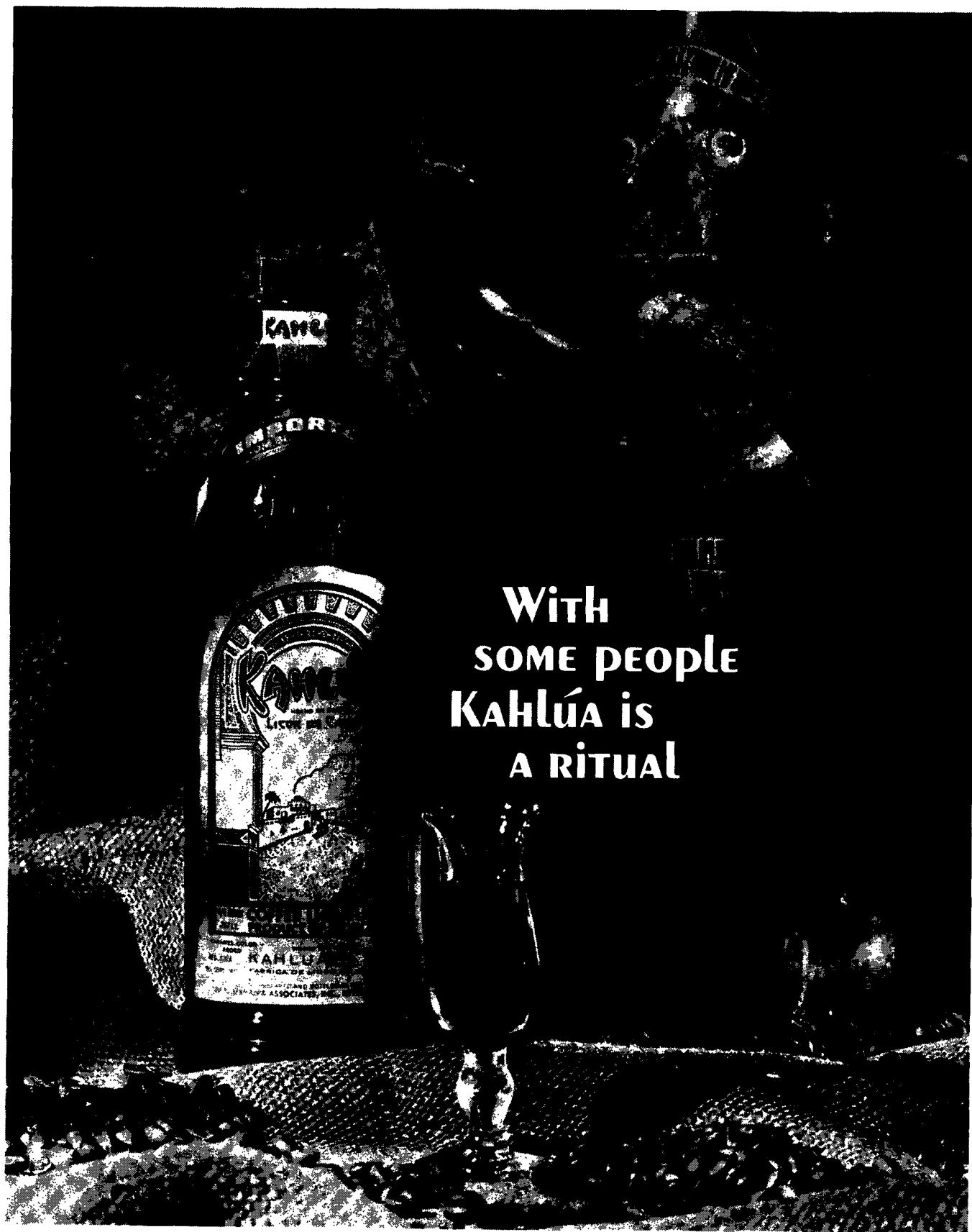
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Berlin, West Germany

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Nathan Glazer's article is a new treatment of an old theme: that Negroes desire assimilation and destruction of black identity. Nothing could be further from the truth. Glazer ignores the movement toward group solidarity and racial identification among American blacks, inspired in part by the revolt of the black masses in Africa...

He also ignores the cleavage between the black middle class and the masses. Except in the South and in isolated Northern places, there has been no mass participation in the civil-rights struggle. Indeed, Negro leaders often are embarrassed by the lack of support Negroes give to their own cause. This apathy is explained by the fact that civil-rights organizations are pursuing white middle-class values, not the needs of the black masses. The breach between the two classes is being occupied by black nationalists and young militants; both these groups reject the non-violent preachings of the middle-class civil-rights organizations.

I suggest that Mr. Glazer leave



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his classroom and visit the pool-halls, barber shops, and nightclubs of the black ghettos. Then he should decide if blacks believe that "heritage, ethnicity, religion, race are only incidental and accidental personal characteristics."

WALTER L. GORDON
Los Angeles, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Professor Glazer's article . . . starts from the invalid premise that Negro demands are designed to destroy those group distinctions which enrich American life today. From my experience with Negroes as President of the Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Boston and as Co-chairman of the National Governing Council of the American Jewish Congress, I find the basic desire of Negroes to be: equality of opportunity for good jobs, for upgrading, for modern housing facilities, for forward-looking education, for use of public accommodations. These aspirations are not markedly different from the aspirations of Protestant Yankees, Irish Catholics, Jews, Italians, Germans, Poles and the other ethnic and religious groups in this country; nor is there any substantial evidence that they are any more likely to destroy the nature of our pluralistic society. . . .

MORRIS MICHELSON
Boston, Massachusetts

Biographer Defended

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . John Gross ["Zangwill in Retrospect," December '64] relies so heavily on Maurice Wohlgeernter's recent study of Zangwill, that one would expect some expression of indebtedness. Surprisingly, the only comment is a negative one: "he spends more time placing Zangwill in the context of minor turn-of-the-century naturalistic novelists . . . than in following topics which one would otherwise have supposed were of more immediate interest to a teacher at Yeshiva University." That Wohlgeernter placed Zangwill in that context is true, but he did so explicitly, not by any sleight-of-hand. Neither is Zangwill's relation to Jews and Judaism slurred over. He is placed in the company of Hess, Pinsker, and Herzl. One of the major themes in Wohlgeernter's work deals with the different roads that brought each of these once-assimilated Jews back to a meaningful identification with his people. Wohlgeernter con-

vincingly draws a dividing line through the ranks of the 19th-century Jewish nationalist epigoni. One group came back to the fold by means of an inner conversion, the other did so as a form of reaction to the new racial anti-Semitism.

Anyone who looks at Wohlgeernter's readable and erudite study after reading Mr. Gross's article will conclude that the latter has not dealt fairly with it.

ELIAS COOPER
Bronx, New York

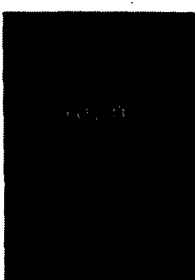
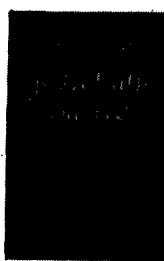
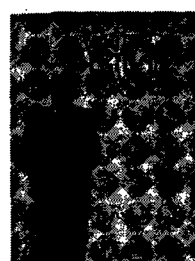
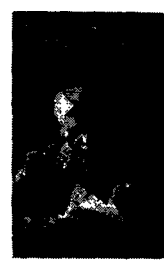
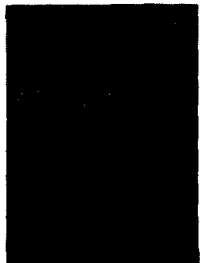
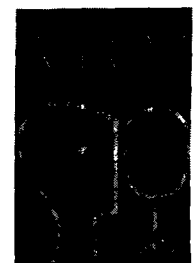
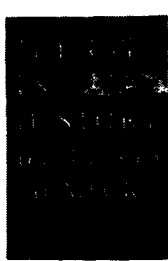
Rabbis & Philosophers

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Accusing Dr. Kadushin of such things as "denying even the rudiments of philosophic method to the rabbis," or "reading out of the tradition some of our greatest spirits and impoverishing rabbinic theology beyond recognition," Marvin Fox [December '64] betrays emotional involvement without giving his readers a sense of the content of Dr. Kadushin's book. It is, to be sure, regrettable that Dr. Kadushin uses a polemical style of writing, but a review of his work should center on the kernel of genuine insight in his thought and not be caught up in the argumentation.

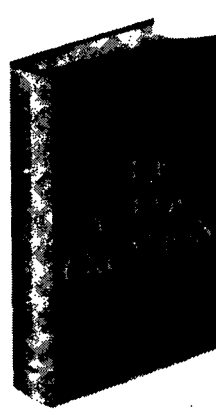
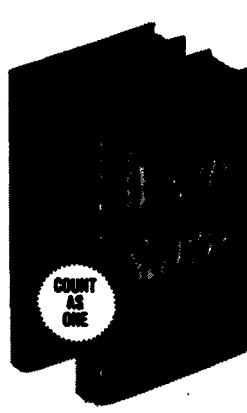
Dr. Kadushin is contrasting the Greek mode of thought—based on the principle of mutually exclusive categories—with the rabbinic one. The latter can best be pictured if we imagine a series of overlapping circles of colored light on a projection screen. All the colors are always present, but as they move and/or vary in intensity, different patterns will be visible to the human eye. . . . Dr. Kadushin tells us that rabbinic thought is made up of value-concepts which blend in different strengths in different circumstances, as the colored lights on the screen do. In this type of organismic thought, there is no "ultimate" or "absolute"; there are no clear-cut, black and white, mutually exclusive categories. Far from being guilty of "straying into the realm of speculation to develop a theory concerning the peculiar character of rabbinic value-concepts," Dr. Kadushin is to be commended for the speculative audacity which he has shown in indicating the broad outlines of the non-"systematic," organismic mode of thought of the rabbis. . . .

(RABBI) DAVID R. BLUMENTHAL
Larchmont, New York



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How Are We? (Contd.)

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As a Reform Democratic "activist," I agree with Mr. Himmelfarb ["How We Are," January] that Jews are a major bulwark of the movement. It has been most successful in localities with a middle-class Jewish population. Six years of knocking on doors also confirms for me the liberalism of most Jews. . . . Still, I wonder. My father's friends, for example, would think me politically on the Right. . . . Perhaps the truth is that while Jews still remain liberal as a group, they have strayed from the radicalism of the previous generation. . . .

ALAN M. KOHN

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Milton Himmelfarb's catalogue of Jewish virtues relies on a plethora of undocumented . . . statistics. They seem reasonable because they do not contradict private observation, but on second glance they are palpable nonsense. . . . He writes, for instance, that a quarter of all books are bought by Jews, though Jews form but 3 per cent of

the population. The latter statistic is ascertainable, but what bookseller has ever tabulated his clients by ethnic origin? . . .

Again: one-half the membership in radical movements is Jewish. How does one count the people in a radical movement, apart from the small core of registered activists? More important, what kind of nut would conceivably spend his time trying to count the Jews in a radical movement, except maybe J. Edgar Hoover? . . .

And so on and so forth. Mr. Himmelfarb is not presenting facts, but learned opinion, which is fallible.

J. A. KINGSLAND

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

When Milton Himmelfarb wrote that a country ruled by either former Senator Goldwater or Governor Wallace would not be a happy place for either their ethnic group supporters or the Jews, he seemed to be expressing an opinion that was not factually supported. . . .

I understand Mr. Himmelfarb's opinion regarding Governor Wallace's backward segregationist views, but to my knowledge, Senator Gold-

water has always been indiscriminately concerned for the welfare of all Americans. . . . Mr. Himmelfarb's . . . equation of Senator Goldwater's views with those of Governor Wallace was therefore unjust. . . .

SHARON KELLY

San Gabriel, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Writing in praise of Jewish intellectualism, . . . Mr. Himmelfarb neglects to mention the crassness and vulgarity so characteristic of American Jewish life, . . . documented in monuments like Miami Beach. . . . Mr. Himmelfarb preaches . . . self-congratulation, even when it is not in order.

. . . Jewish intellectualism (as well as political liberalism, for that matter) are heirlooms of Jewish life in Western Europe. . . . Perhaps Mr. Himmelfarb should have entitled his article "How We Used to Be Back There."

SIDNEY P. KADISH

Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Contrary to Mr. Himmelfarb's assertion, it is not "respect for knowledge and learning" per se which causes today's young Jews to huddle around the professor's rostrum, but rather thirst for the social and material benefits which accrue to those with knowledge and learning. Jewish parents for the most part send their children to college to get their degrees; if they come home with a little education besides, that's o.k., too. Nothing has fared more poorly in the American Jewish community than *Torah*—except *Torah lishmah*.

I doubt, therefore, that the fears of the Jewish supporters of PAT were different from the fears of the Gentile members. To be sure, there was some concern with lowering the quality of their children's education. But the prime motivations were fear that their children would be beaten up on the way home from school by some tough Negro kids, and concern over too much interracial social contact. . . .

BERNARD KABAK

Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Milton Himmelfarb's buckshot barrage against Professor Melvin Tumin and "radical intellectuals" relies in part upon distortion of the position of the American Council for Judaism in order to make a dubious point. . . .

He asserts that "ACJ's Briefs"

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Freedom Of Conscience

Though Moses Michael Hays is best known as the founder of the Scottish Rite of Masonry in America, perhaps more important, he was one in the long line of patriots who struck a blow for freedom of conscience.

Born in New York in 1739, Hays moved to Newport, Rhode Island, shortly before the Revolution. In 1776, Hays' loyalty to the American cause was impugned, and he was asked to sign a loyalty oath. With a courage rare for the times, when hysteria and suspicion ran wild, Hays demanded to be confronted by his accusers.

In an eloquent petition to the Rhode Island General Assembly, Hays refused to sign the oath. It was unconstitutional, he held. Furthermore, he pointed out, since Jews could not vote, the oath was discriminatory. He prevailed; no one ever again doubted his loyalty.

After the Revolution, Hays settled in Boston, where he soon made his mark in business, chiefly as a maritime insurance broker. He helped found Boston's first bank, today known as the First National Bank of Boston.

To his home came many of the notables of the day, including Senator Harrison Otis and Ezra Styles, President of Yale. Hays, a Federalist, sought public office but was swamped by the rising tide of Jeffersonian Republicanism.

However, as deputy inspector-general of Masonry for North America, Hays achieved the eminence he missed in public life. For four years he was grand master of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. Paul Revere was his deputy.

Moses Michael Hays died in 1805. He is buried in the famous Colonial cemetery in Newport, Rhode Island.



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(sic) "impeached Rabbi Prinz for three sins: violating the political neutrality of the pulpit, unpatriotically suggesting—ACJ is nothing if not patriotic—that the United States was threatened by something fascist, and thus encouraging Jewish self-ghettoization."

Himmelfarb's careless misreading of the name of ACJ's *Brief* is symptomatic. *Brief* did not accuse Rabbi Prinz of "violating the political neutrality of the pulpit." ACJ believes pulpits should be free. *Brief* did say that Rabbi Prinz's statement, "A Jewish vote for Goldwater is a vote for Jewish suicide," clearly implied "that the United States teetered on the brink of Hitler-style dictatorship." Parenthetically, the Zionist line is, "It can happen here—we need Israel as insurance." *Brief* did not suggest that Rabbi Prinz is "unpatriotic." As for "encouraging self-ghettoization," ACJ's *Brief* quoted the *B'nai B'rith Messenger* of Los Angeles as saying that Rabbi Prinz's statement "is an example of the extremism he derides."

Himmelfarb is equally careless in quoting ACJ's *Education in Judaism*. *Education in Judaism* did not say "Tumin's article": it referred to

the "paper" he presented to a meeting of the editors of *Judaism*.

Education in Judaism said that Tumin's paper and the "subsequent discussion is well worth reading." The implication of uncritical acclaim for Tumin because he denied "self-ghettoization" is false (although I share Tumin's opinion of Dr. Leo Pfeffer's advocacy of self-ghettoization). I wrote:

Dr. Tumin does not give adequate recognition to the weight and force of a large, coherent, well-financed, professional apparatus supported by a national state, and promoting a coherent nationalist ideology, with the supine acquiescence of disorganized and disoriented individuals.

ALFRED RUSSEL
Editor

Education in Judaism
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was bemused to find myself described in Milton Himmelfarb's article as an "anticipator" of M. M. Tumin, . . . for I had thought my article on "The Jewish College Student: 1951 Model" (COMMENTARY, October 1951) had tried to describe

things exactly as they were then, or as they seemed to be, not as anyone would have liked them to be. I went back to the anthology, *Commentary on the American Scene*, and saw, ruefully, that I could indeed be read as lamenting the disappearance of the "traditional" Jewish student. It wasn't much satisfaction either to read the conclusion of the last article in the book, by Irving Howe, which summed up one theme in the collection: "The *alrightniks* have won. . . . Their turn to Judaism is fundamentally a means of organized adaptation toward American middle-class businessman values. But what social or ethical promise can one find in it?"

All right, let us say with Himmelfarb that Jews have not been and are not now abandoning their ancient social, ethical, and intellectual values. But why did it seem that way in the 40's and 50's? . . .

Perhaps the answer is contained in some of the statistics in Himmelfarb's article. Jews voted as a bloc for Roosevelt, Stevenson, Johnson, and even Keating, but, plainly, they were only part of a much larger bloc. For all Himmelfarb's insistence that Jews are different, they are the same, in political and social

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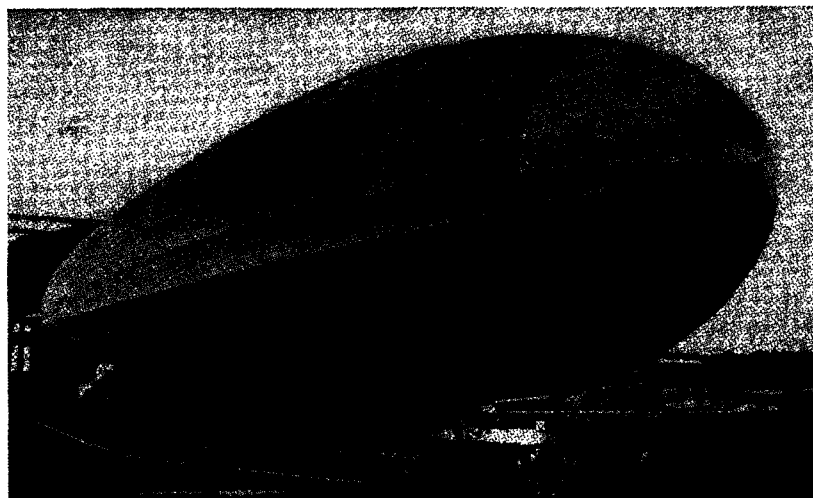
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values, as that larger, more inclusive class of which they are a part. They are different in the political and social ways that that class differs from the total American population. That class may expand or shrink . . . but it will always be larger than the Jewish part of it. . . .

"Jews," Elliot Cohen wrote in his introduction to the 1953 volume, "traditionally feel that they live under a covenant. What if—suddenly it occurs to us—it is the fate of American Jews to live under a double covenant, our ancient one and that which we feel crystallizing in the American firmament? Awful thought! But need a double covenant be a double burden—may it not prove a double blessing . . . ?

Jews as a body are giving substance, elaboration, and support to a host of liberal social and political values in a significant area of the larger American firmament. That this population shares Jewish values, votes "with" the Jewish vote, adapts and adopts the Jewish covenant, does not make it any less American and may make it more Jewish. But it does *not* make Jews less Jewish or more American.

MORRIS FREEDMAN

Dept. of English
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

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Mr. HIMMELFARB writes:

(1) Mr. Kohn: In T. B. Rosh Ha-shanah (25a, b) we read:

It is said (I Samuel 12: 6-12): "And Samuel said unto the people: 'It is the LORD that made Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers out of the land of Egypt. . . . But they forgot the LORD their God, and He gave them over into the hand of Sisera . . . , and . . . the Philistines, and . . . the king of Moab. . . . And they cried unto the LORD. . . . And the LORD sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelt in safety.' " . . . It is further said (Psalms 99: 6): "Moses and Aaron among His priests, / And Samuel among them that call upon His name, / Did call upon the LORD, and He answered them." Scripture treats our three least worthy chiefs equally with the three most worthy; to teach you that Jerubbaal in his generation is like Moses in *his* generation, Bedan in his generation like Aaron in his, and Jephthah in his generation like Samuel in his. . . . And it is said (Ecclesiastes 7: 10): "Say not, 'Why were the former days better than these?' For it is not from wisdom that you ask this."

Anyway, the radicalism of the previous generation was not everything your father's friends would have you believe it was.

(2) Mr. Kingsland: I referred to "someone in the publishing business." Robert Gutwillig ("What Ails the Book Trade?" *New Leader*, May 15, 1961) tells us that the Jews are "the single most important book and bookstore audience in this country" and that "the book trade now strongly suspects that the Jewish audience is indeed the basic audience. . . . Publishers appear to be taking dead aim at the Jewish audience." This does not make him happy. "I seriously doubt," he says, "that it is a healthy situation. . . ." (I doubt it, too.)

Mr. Kingsland asks what kind of nut would want to know about the characteristics of the people in this or that political movement. Not a nut, but any competent sociologist or political scientist—Max Weber in his time and, for instance, S. M. Lipset, Nathan Glazer, and R. V. Burks today.

(3) Miss Kelly: For Goldwater to be elected, the country would

simply have to be illiberal and nativist.

(4) Mr. Kadish: I was writing not in praise of Jewish intellectualism but in dispraise of the notion that we are worse than we were in the 30's and the same as everyone else. Perhaps I am better able now to shield myself against crassness and vulgarity than when I was younger, or perhaps I have grown coarse, but I have not noticed that there is more of it today than there used to be. Besides, vulgarity was not an issue; and if you want to raise it, why pick an easy target like Miami (which I have never seen)? There are more serious vulgarities, less well-recognized.

I am disappointed at having been found out preaching self-congratulation. I had thought I was concealing it cleverly, quoting Lionel Trilling about the "self-admiring" Jews and calling the Jewish community "obviously quite awful"—though "equally obviously . . . less awful than practically anything else."

(5) Mr. Kabak: Respect for knowledge and learning had as little to do with the college attendance of Jews in the glorious past as it has in the degenerate present—as little or as much. We tend to exaggerate the disinterested purity of the motives for education in the past. A hundred years ago the grand old fortifying classical curriculum of Eton and Oxbridge was what qualified a young man for a career as a district commissioner in India or as an MP, or as a clergyman or don; and in the *shtetl* the *lerner* knew that his education would earn him high status, not to speak of a good chance to become a rich man's son-in-law.

On the day of the Parents and Taxpayers' school boycott in New York, one all-white school closed down entirely. It was far from any Negroes, but also far from any Jews. The average Jewish member of PAT is not entirely different from the average Gentile member, but he is nevertheless likely to be different in some significant way.

(6) Finally, as to Mr. Russel's letter: I like that "*sic*," the adverb of dismay. It suggests so prissily that no one can possibly trust a man who cites *Briefs* rather than *Brief*, or "Tumin's article" where the original had "paper."

Russel would have us believe that "*Brief* did not accuse Rabbi Prinz of 'violating the political neutrality of the pulpit.'" What then is the meaning of this sentence: "More was involved than

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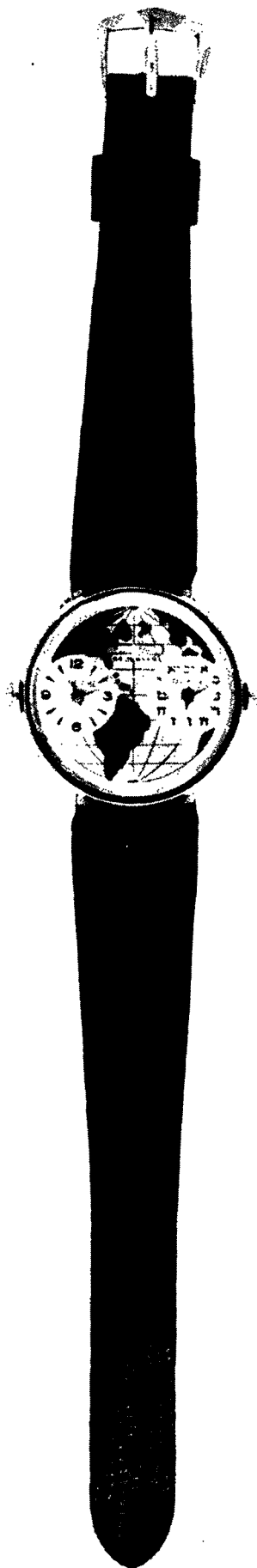
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Rabbi Prinz's appeal to Jews to support one candidate?"

He would have us believe that "*Brief* did not suggest that Rabbi Prinz is 'unpatriotic.'" (There is a good opportunity here for a *sic*, but let it pass.) In the same breath he tells us that Prinz "clearly implied" the imminent danger of a "Hitler-style dictatorship" in the United States and that "parenthetically"—a splendid word—that is "the Zionist line"! Anyone even slightly familiar with the American Council for Judaism's usage knows what meaning it attaches to "Zionist."

But then, ACJ is ACJ because of its obsessive fantasies about Zionism. Zionism had about as much to do with the anti-Goldwater sentiment of American Jews in 1964 as with their anti-McCarthy sentiment in 1954. Besides, when rabbis in 1954 preached against McCarthy, they were not molding but reflecting their people's views; and so in 1964 when (or if) they preached against Goldwater. A day or two after we all watched, with fascinated horror, the Republican convention in San Francisco, I heard an important communal leader, more anti- than non-Zionist, who voted for Nixon in 1960, warn that American Jews might be standing where the German Jews stood in 1931.

Similarly with those terrible day schools and the "large, coherent, well-financed, professional apparatus supported by a national state, and promoting a coherent nationalist ideology. . . ." It's enough to make you shiver, isn't it? Then you look at the thing itself, and you see that nearly all the day schools (total enrollment 50,000-odd) are Orthodox. Of the three Jewish so-called denominations in America, Orthodoxy is the most varied, but on the whole it is the least Zionist and certainly the least influenced by a secular (or secularist) state and government. The greatest self-ghettoizer in American Jewry is the Satmar Rebbe, who is possibly more anti-Israel than even ACJ. At any rate, *he* will not be tempted to reply with a long letter—always long—protesting that he is not really anti-Israel, only against Israel.

Vietnam

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am unimpressed with David Halberstam's self-vindicating article ["Getting the Story in Vietnam," January].

The course of events in Vietnam since the coup that deposed the Diem family provides little support for the view that Buddhist dissatisfactions were exclusively religious in character and that a new regime was what was needed to press hostilities successfully and unify the country. Yet Halberstam has been a chief proponent of the latter position, and he strongly suggests in his article that he was prescient and the administration dense during his tenure in Southeast Asia. As we now know to our sorrow, matters have gone from bad to worse in Vietnam since the coup, and the Buddhists, far from recognizing the United States as a savior of their spiritual interests, are vigorously demonstrating against Americans in an attempt to seize political power.

Perhaps General Taylor and then Vice-President Johnson were correct in the summer of 1961 when they said that the Diem government, as distasteful as it was from many points of view, was "all we've got out there." And perhaps the late President Kennedy was correct when he told Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, the publisher of the *New York Times*, that Halberstam was "too close to the story, too involved."

It is, of course, true that Halberstam was awarded a Pulitzer prize for his reporting out of Vietnam. But juries of awards have been known to err, and one cannot help wondering, in light of recent events, whether this was not such a case.

NORMAN DORSEN

New York University School of Law
New York City

The Vatican Council

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I read with great interest, and not a little disbelief in some parts, the article by "F. E. Cartus," "Vatican II and the Jews" [January]. The article makes assertions about the Vatican and the Vatican Council that by their nature cannot be known except on the unlikely hypothesis that in every case the author had secret access to confidential information that was denied to everybody else.

To mention just one case in point: the author writes that "on October 12, Paul received President Sukarno of Indonesia who had unpleasant news for the Pope. If the document on the Jews was

passed, all Vatican diplomatic missions in the Arab countries might be closed."

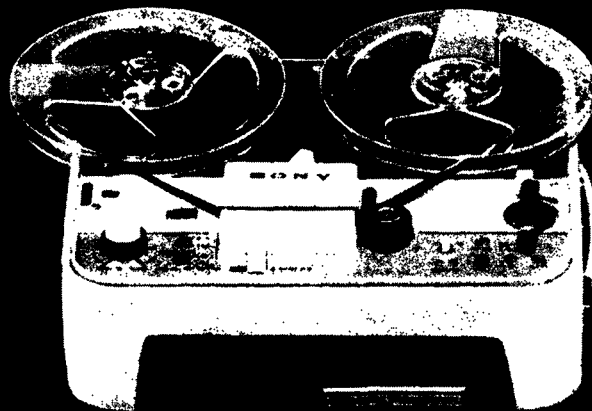
If Sukarno made any such representations to the Pope, it was naturally a secret communication. How could F. E. Cartus have got it? Are functionaries in the Vatican State Department any more disloyal than those in our own State Department, who usually guard diplomatic secrets quite effectively?

THE burden of F. E. Cartus's whole article is that "conservative" forces in the Vatican Council were at least as obstructive of voting on the Draft on the Jews as were out-

side forces, namely the Arab powers. Monsignor Mark Hurley Chancellor of the Diocese of Stockton, California, who was actually a member of the committee on non-Christian religions, tells quite a different story. In a paper read at a Catholic-Jewish Conference held at Regis on January 13 of this year, Monsignor Hurley told the entire story of the Draft on the Jews, which he called "The Odyssey of a Document."

Here he said: "No other proposal, so far, has met with less opposition within the aula of St. Peter's and yet none has provoked so much or nearly so much 'outside' pressure. At least five govern-

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ments, presumably Arab, have protested the declaration on the grounds that it will have political repercussions in the Near East. . . . Worried by this furor, Jewish leaders from the U.S. and from Europe urgently advised their colleagues to call off the pressures and to trust the Conciliar Fathers to act conscientiously and reasonably."

THE debate, however, went on as though all these measures and counter-measures never existed. Of thirty-five who spoke on the declaration only three could have been described as even mildly against it, and these were against it only because of the fear of retaliation on the Christians living in the Near East by the Arab governments in that area.

When the vote was taken on the new declaration on the Jews last November, 95 per cent of the Fathers voted approval. Session IV will see the final vote, but the omens are favorable. As Monsignor Hurley said, the deciding factor in this voting will be religion alone, the necessity to uphold Christian doctrine and Christian charity, which demand that nothing in that doctrine be abused to the prejudice of any people, especially the Jews, with whose history the Catholic Church is so intimately intertwined. The "official attitude" of the Catholic Church toward the Jews, of which Cartus speaks, needs revision in the light of such facts as were brought out by Monsignor Hurley.

CARTUS MENTIONS further a prayer composed by John three months before his death in June 1963, and which he originally intended to have read aloud in all Catholic churches of the world on a fixed date.

This prayer is not in the style of John XXIII, nor is it in the style of official prayers imposed on the whole Church. Particularly suspect to me are the words: "Forgive us for the curse we falsely attached to their name as Jews." Since the Catholic Church has never attached any curse to the Jews, how could it ask forgiveness? Individual Catholics may have done so, but in that case the Pope would have said "many" or "some" instead of "we."

Most suspect of all, this alleged prayer was not released through the Catholic press. If John XXIII actually composed it, the Vatican must have published it. If the

Vatican did not publish it, then how does Cartus know its wording?

PAUL H. HALLETT
Associate Editor

The Register
Denver, Colorado

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY: . . . You are to be congratulated on the timeliness of the article. Few popular magazines—religious or secular—if any at all, have taken the trouble to analyze the thorny complexities involved in any public policy of the Vatican toward the Jewish people. Enemies of the Jewish people will see any policy as an endorsement of Zionism or the State of Israel or as a stab against the Arabs, etc. Enemies of the Vatican view its procrastination as but another proof of moral cowardice, race prejudice, or New Testament anti-Semitism. That COMMENTARY chose to expose the whole problem with such lucid objectivity is another tribute to its excellence of taste, its well-balanced goals, and its sense of fair play.

(FR.) BERARD GUINNESSSEY, S.A.
Atonement Seminary
Franciscan Friars of the Atonement
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

We are all indebted to F. E. Cartus for his article. In the light of his revelation of the effect of political pressures on the behavior of popes and cardinals it should be perfectly plain to those dignitaries of the Church why the High Priest Caiaphas behaved as he did under pressure from Rome, which then had soldiers stationed in Jerusalem whereas there are now no foreign soldiers in the Vatican. . . .

F. E. CARTUS ends his revelation with the statement that ". . . the Roman Catholic Church has unequivocally issued a statement that will be of immense value in uprooting anti-Semitism. . . ." But anti-Semitism is a paranoid affliction which discharges self-guilt in charging its victim with guilt; and it can only be uprooted if, along with the recognition of the innocence of its victim, it declares its own guilt and penitence. This was done by Pope John in 1963 in his statement quoted by the author. The reluctance of the Vatican to endorse and disseminate such a statement as a doctrine for all Christians makes the conclusion of the article seem more wishful than

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prophetic. Nevertheless we owe him a vote of thanks.

IRVING FINEMAN
Shaftsbury, Vermont

MR. CARTUS writes:

There are a number of inaccuracies and inappropriate remarks in Mr. Hallett's letter; only some can be mentioned here.

(1) President Sukarno's visit to Paul VI, and the President's mission to represent to His Holiness the views of the Arab powers, was a matter of public knowledge and was spoken of in various European and Middle Eastern newspapers.

(2) True, "no proposal so far has met with less opposition within the aula of St. Peter's"—from the majority, that is to say, of the Council who belong to the liberal movement in the Church. But it is also true that the conservative forces in the Vatican Council and in the Vatican administration did and are doing all they can to obstruct the document.

(3) There were 34 speakers (not 35) who spoke on the document during the general discussion, 14 on September 28, and 20 on September 29. "Only three could have been described as mild-

ly against it," says Mr. Hallett blithely. For the record, the following spoke directly against the document: Cardinals Tappouni, Ruffini, Bueno y Monreal, Archbishops Sfair and Descuffi, Bishops Podesta and Tawil. In addition Cardinal Tappouni was authorized, and stated explicitly that he undertook, to speak in the names of the four leaders of the Eastern Uniat Churches: Stephanos I Sidarouss (Alexandria), Maximos IV Saigh (Antioch), Paul II Cheikho (Babylon), Ignatius Peter XVI Batanian (Cilicia). Expressing grave doubts and reservations as to the very essence of the document were: Bishops Daem, Lamont, Nierman, Nowicki, Stein.

(4) Mr. Hallett proceeds: "when the vote was taken, 95 per cent of the Fathers voted for approval." What vote, Mr. Hallett, and approval of what? The good Fathers exercised three votes on the document concerned. One was taken on the Jewish section of the document, and the voting ran as follows: yeas—1770; nays—185; null—14. This is an approval of 89.84 per cent. The other vote on the entire document concerning Islam, Judaism, and non-Christian religions in general went as follows:

yeas—1651; nays—99; null—4; votes of modified approval—242. This give us an approval of 82.63 per cent of the *entire* document. Mr. Hallett's 95 per cent is rather generous.

I frankly don't understand Mr. Hallett's remark: "Session IV will see the final vote, but the omens are favorable." As the writer of the article in question, I am supposed to have drawn on secret and confidential knowledge, but Mr. Hallett indulges in prophecy ("Session IV will see the final vote") and a touch of the astrologer ("the omens are favorable"). Even the Pope does not know at present if there will be a final vote until the meeting of the Central Coordinating Committee in the late spring of this year. And why are the omens favorable? On April 4 of this year in Rome, His Holiness said that the Jews "not only did not recognize Him, but fought Him, slandered and injured Him, and, in the end, killed Him." This sentiment contradicts one essential statement of the Council declaration on the Jews.

I would like Mr. Hallett to tell us the characteristics of Pope John XXIII's style and to substantiate his statements—but please, not based on an English translation of the Pope's writings. Pope John never asserted, and the words of the prayer quoted in my article do not express, the idea that "The Church attached a curse to their [the Jews'] name"—officially, that is to say. There are Papal documents of the medieval period in which the term "*maledicti*" (cf. Denzinger's *Enchiridion*) is applied to Jews. Anti-Semitic Churchmen, of course, such as John Chrysostom, explicitly affixed the term "cursed" to the name Jew. And while Archbishop of Milan, the present Holy Father endorsed an anti-Semitic publication (with an approving preface) in which the Jews were described as "cursed." Yes, we have as Catholics and Christians described and considered the Jews as cursed, for over fifteen hundred years.

I happen to know the wording of the prayer because I read the prayer. At the present moment it lies in the Vatican in a folder with its own filing number. Of course, I am not going to communicate the filing number: Mr. Hallett is not authorized to penetrate the Vatican archives and secret papers.

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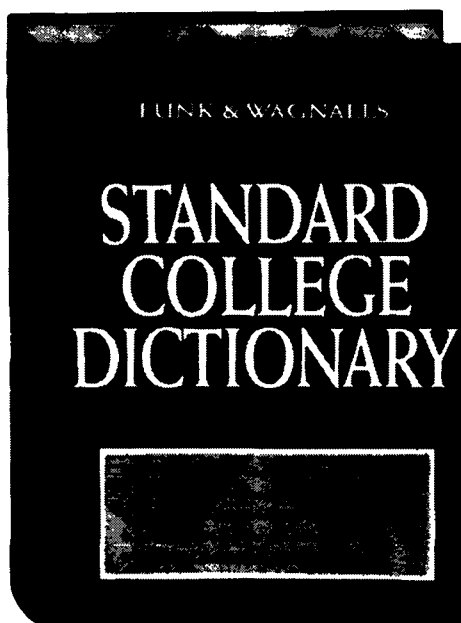
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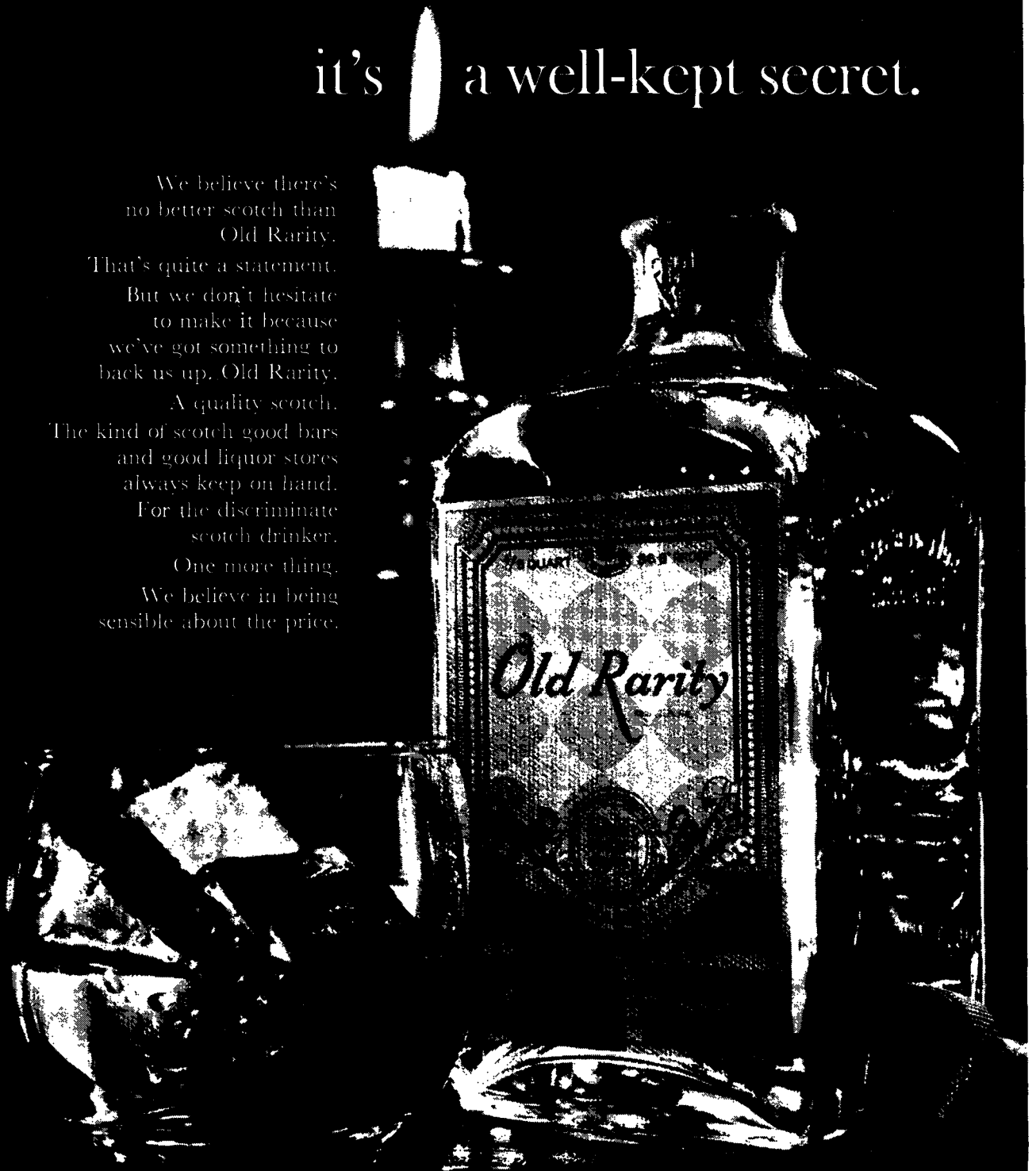
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ROBERT LEKACHMAN

LYNDON B. JOHNSON is without question more lovingly immersed in domestic issues, and more effective in getting his programs through Congress, than any American President since Franklin Roosevelt in his first term of office. He is, in addition, infinitely more familiar with the practical economics of domestic policy than his immediate predecessor ever was. As a successful entrepreneur of the southwestern variety, Mr. Johnson is a sophisticated student of the intricate relations between federal, state, and local agencies on the one side, and very specific business interests on the other. Indeed, no Texas politician less securely armored could long survive the claws of the ravenous oil and gas multimillionaires who dominate that state. Mr. Johnson understands—emotionally, financially, and politically—the rulings of the Tariff Commission, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Internal Revenue Service, the Federal Trade Commission, the Federal Communications Commission, and the dozens upon dozens of other governmental instrumentalities which have a word or two to say about the conditions under which goods are produced, displayed, advertised, or sold; or the circumstances under which businesses may merge or cooperate; or the proportions in which profits must be divided between taxes and dividends; or the height to which depreciation allowances and business entertainment may be allowed to soar; or the regulations which apply to the recruitment and supervision of agricultural laborers. When businessmen, after meeting with him, comment admiringly upon his grasp of their problems, they are testifying to the unique expertise of a President steeped in the tribal lore of American enterprise. Mr. Johnson has fully earned the accolade conferred upon him by his new Secretary of Commerce, John Connor, fresh from Merck & Co., who, according to *Business Week*, judges that his new chief understands business and businessmen “better than any President

since God knows when.” Explained Mr. Connor: “I was attracted to the job by the President’s frequent statement of his philosophy—which is just what I’ve been saying.”

The consequence of all this is a love affair between the President and the business community which confounds the history of business treatment of Democratic administrations. For example, the highly conservative, highly Republican *Monthly News Letter* of New York’s First National City Bank delivered itself of the following endorsement of the administration’s 1965 legislative program: “. . . these reports and messages indicate a marked evolution toward a more pronounced pro-business attitude, combined with an increasing stress on free competition in the allocation process. It is clear that the administration’s views on some basic policy issues have come to converge with those of the business community.” After this encomium, the writer of the *News Letter* barely had the heart to repeat the bank’s monthly warning against the growth of federal bureaucracy. Thus it is that bankers and industrialists who hated President Kennedy because of his “anti-business” views and advisers, except with gratitude from their new friend in the White House the investment tax credits, the liberalized depreciation allowances, the diminished progression of the personal income tax structure, and the reduced corporate income tax which stemmed from their late “enemy’s” recommendations. Judged by their actions, it would be difficult to say that Mr. Kennedy was any less kind to American enterprise than Mr. Johnson. But to go by the business press, Lyndon Baines Johnson’s accession to the Presidency represented the most glorious manumission of the slaves since Abraham Lincoln.

All Presidents are complex men. Mr. Johnson was born and raised a poor boy who had to scramble very hard for the best education he could afford. As a young man he worked in the National Youth Administration, where he simultaneously prepared the way for his own entry into Congress and assisted other poor boys to get their feet on the first rung of the ladder of opportunity—training and education. In his bones Mr. John-

ROBERT LEKACHMAN, currently professor of economics at Barnard, will be moving to the State University of New York at Stony Brook this fall to become chairman of its economics department.

son knows that there is poverty in the land: he was poor. In his heart he knows that success is possible: he has succeeded. As a man of sentiment and as a practical politician, he is unlikely to forget either his origins or the means by which he moved upward from them. More naturally, perhaps, than some of his other roles, the President readily plays the part of the triumphant populist.

Mr. Johnson, then, is gratified with our society—the society he has mastered. Nor does he have a quarrel with the thrusting entrepreneurs who within their own sphere of operation have learned to work the levers and controls which turn on the profits and the sales. Why should not all Americans have the same chance to share the rewards of a productive economy? In a greater America—the Great Society—the poor, the young, and the colored will all be assimilated by a working, bustling, prospering economy. If anything is clear in the President's program, it is the drive not toward the transformation of society but toward the expansion of the economic machine. This is not an ignoble vision. But it is a highly conservative one.

II

SEEN in this context, the hundreds of pages of Presidential advice to Congress emerge as rather more coherent than item-by-item analysis might suggest. Inevitably the documents which sound the major legislative themes are the Budget Message and the *Economic Report*. The latter begins with a commercial for past policy and rehearses the economic triumphs of 1964: "additional jobs for 1½ million persons have been created in the past year"; "Gross National Product (GNP) advanced strongly from \$584 billion in 1963 to \$622 billion in 1964"; "corporate profits after taxes have now risen continuously for four straight years—from a rate of \$19½ billion early in 1961 to nearly \$32 billion at the end of 1964"; "average personal income after taxes has reached \$2,288 a year—up 17½ percent in four years"; etc., etc. "Thus," proclaims the President in italics, "the record of our past four years has been one of *simultaneous advances toward full employment, rapid growth, price stability, and international balance*." Who is responsible for such good things? All of us: "businessmen, workers, investors, farmers, and consumers." And, as the cigarette ads are wont to put it, there has also been an extra margin of difference: "government policies which have sustained a steady, but non-inflationary, growth of markets." "I believe," says the President of the year in which the Civil Rights Act finally became law, "that 1964 will go down in our economic and political history as the 'year of the tax cut.'"

From this recital of cooperative achievement

and stylish public administration, Mr. Johnson drew his 1965 moral: "Purposeful expenditures, stimulative tax reduction, and economy in Government operations are the three weapons which, if used effectively, can relieve our society of the costs and consequences of waste." This was more than rhetoric, for the President had some very concrete tax and spending benefits in mind, including the remainder of the personal income tax reductions (about \$3 billion) and the corporate tax reductions (about \$1 billion) scheduled in the 1964 law. In addition, the President promised a drop in excises worth another \$1.75 billion to businessmen. As for "purposeful expenditures," Social Security payments and Poverty Program appropriations were to rise, and new programs—medicare, Appalachia, aid to education—were to receive initial financing. All in all, welfare spending was slated for a \$5-6 billion increase. And everything—tax benefits and spending—was to be financed out of the normal growth of an expanding economy.

This is not a program designed to reallocate the community's resources in the direction of greater public influence. On the reasonable assumption that an economy operating at 88 per cent of manufacturing capacity and 5 per cent unemployment can stand some stimulus from fiscal policy, the President plans a deficit of about the same size as the calendar 1964 figure of \$8.2 billion. Now the very existence of this deficit is a significant comment on the health of the private sector of the American economy. In this, the fifth year of business expansion, it is still necessary—as it was last year and the years before—to supplement by public means the private creation of jobs and income. But once this continuing deficiency of aggregate demand is conceded, it is impossible to avoid a second judgment, on the adequacy of the administration's proposed stimulus. Here judgment has been rendered very easy by the administration's own line of argument. In their *Economic Report*, the Council of Economic Advisers predict that average unemployment will drop in 1965 very little if at all below the unsatisfactory level of 1964. Their analysis tends to demonstrate (some independent economists dissenting) that unemployment can be diminished only if the aggregate spending of the community, government included, rises high enough. Since Dr. Ackley and his colleagues do not believe that inflation is an imminent danger, they could safely have recommended a larger fiscal stimulus than the President's program contains. Thus, as matters now stand, the administration's major economic statement to the nation leads to a larger program of expansion than the President has offered to Congress.

Why the President halted short of an injection of spending really capable of reducing unemployment is unclear. Possibly he feared to violate the \$100-billion budget taboo, even

though he will surely do so in 1966, and even though most businessmen are by now capable of distinguishing between the nearly meaningless Administrative Budget and a Cash Budget which has exceeded \$100 billion for some years. Conceivably, Mr. Johnson's business admirers are still so tentatively committed to the new Keynesian public finance that they prefer small stimuli to large, and moderate deficits to effective deficits. Probably they are sufficiently content with the Democratic combination of generous corporate profits and easy labor markets to oppose more stimulus than is guessed necessary to maintain the existing euphoria.

By the standards of an administration which uses liberal Democratic rhetoric, such stimulus as has been offered is peculiarly distributed. For one thing, tax reductions still receive heavy emphasis, even after the sharp slashes of 1964. Now each tax benefit is an implicit choice of private goods in preference to public alternatives, for every time a tax rate is cut, it becomes that much harder to finance adequate approaches to education, health, and housing. It appears likely that all the increases in old social programs and all the spending on new ones put together will exceed this year's tax benefits by no more than a billion dollars.

This is bad enough, but the distribution of both tax cuts and public spending raises still livelier apprehensions. A large part of this year's tax benefits, like last year's, will go to prosperous corporations and wealthy individuals. The government's share of corporate profits will therefore shrink—both because the rates on profits will fall and because the President has suspended the application of the depreciation rules in a fashion calculated to add another \$700 million to corporate earnings in this calendar year. No doubt some of the excise tax reductions will be passed on to consumers, but some substantial portion will further enlarge profits which are judged satisfactory at present levels even by corporate executives.

Even the design of the expenditure programs leads to some questions about exactly who will benefit—high, middle, or low. The proposed rent subsidies are a fair example. They are to be extended not to the poor, but to a very large group of families earning between \$4,000-6,500, a category well above the poverty line. The other likely gainers are builders and landlords, rarely to be found on the welfare rolls. Or consider the Appalachian program. The most expensive of the plans in the new legislation is a major road-building effort (once again roads are playing their role as the public-works project which unites all Americans). Now in the long-run, new roads in the right places may open the region to the tourist trade, promote the internal mobility of labor, and encourage industrialists to establish new plants. However, in the short run it is the

contractors who reap the principal gains. Not even the poverty program is exempted from this general design of dispensing largesse to the rich. Major corporations like Litton Industries, Philco, and International Telephone & Telegraph have signed up as operators of new job camps. One of Litton's executives remarked, "We got into the poverty war for two reasons. One was the opportunity to serve the community. The other was the business opportunity." So, too, with aid to education. The new Act, while taking account of schools in deprived areas, also promises relief to parents who send their children to private and parochial schools. And even the medicare measure contains its accommodations to the AMA and the insurance companies.

Is it any wonder, then, that reasonable businessmen should smile approvingly upon the President's housing, medical, education, poverty, and regional development proposals? The total outlays involved are small enough to be unalarming. The prosperous have something to gain. Frequently the programs are so designed as to enlist the enthusiastic cooperation of builders, lenders, insurance companies, contractors, and landlords. It all seems to prove that the business community has belatedly achieved the minimal intellectual sophistication necessary to recognize the benefits to business of tax relief for all, and social welfare programs which incidentally offer a chance or two for an honest profit. If organized opposition to the administration program finally manifests itself, its logical locus is among the members of AFL-CIO unions rather than the Union League Clubs of the land. But there is enough ideological confusion in both places to make this desirable clarification rather unlikely.

III

IN SHORT, the administration's programs can be appraised realistically only within the limits of its commitment to a consensus whose terms are defined by the business community. How quickly, for example, can we expect to construct adequate quantities of low-income housing? How rapid is to be the destruction of urban slums and their replacement by something better? The major Johnson answer is contained in the message on cities. The problem, proclaims the President, is huge:

In the remainder of this century . . . urban population will double, city land will double and we will have to build in our cities as much as all that we have built since the first colonist arrived on these shores. . . . Yet these overwhelming pressures are being visited upon cities already in distress. We have over nine million homes, most of them in cities, which are run down or deteriorating; over four million do not have running water or even plumbing. Many of our central cities are in need of major surgery to

overcome decay. . . . The old, the poor, the discriminated against are increasingly concentrated in central city ghettos.

Fair enough. What then is to be done?

As is apparent, not very much. Not that some of the President's recommendations are not in themselves sensible. The proposed Department of Housing and Urban Development might give the cities a stronger bureaucratic voice. The notion of a Temporary National Commission on Codes, Zoning, Taxation, and Development is also a perfectly good one. Cities do need better advice on community renewal programs and perhaps, as the President proposes, the taking of the advice should be the condition upon which federal funds are released. As for rent subsidies—the one substantially new idea in the President's message—they are fine in the abstract, if not in the plan for their distribution.

How much can the major cities anticipate from this new approach? This year and next they promise almost nothing to the residents of the barren inner ghettos. New York City can expect no more than 3500 units a year of low-income construction, and as Mrs. Hortense Gabel has noted, the federal government means to spend less on all housing programs in New York City than it did four years ago. What is needed is precisely what the administration has no intention of providing: a huge and coordinated program of urban renewal and public housing. The past failures of urban renewal, lovingly recounted in Martin Anderson's *The Federal Bulldozer*,* derive partly from the perversion of the program into a series of subsidies to commercial interests, and partly from the fact that adequate quantities of public housing—attractively designed, socially mixed, and suitably located—were never supplied. In New York, at the end of a generation-long boom in private construction, there is still no decent place for most Negroes and Puerto Ricans to live.

The administration program here is minute, far below Senator Taft's goals for a smaller population nearly twenty years ago. Here is the key Johnsonian passage on public housing:

The public housing program should be continued with an authorization ample enough to permit an increase in the number of units as well as to conduct a program of rehabilitation.

"Ample" seems hardly the word for 35,000 units of public housing each year for the entire country. As for urban renewal, "we will continue to use urban renewal to help revitalize the business and industrial districts which are the economic base of the central city. But this program should be more and more concentrated on the development

of residential areas." An intelligent shift of emphasis, if it were not so apparent that the residential communities to be created are highly unlikely to include the inhabitants of Harlem.

Looked at coldly, the housing proposals seem admirably calculated to please the construction industry, aid middle-income families, enlarge banking profits, and leave in much their present situation the mass of wretchedly housed urban dwellers. Like most of the social-welfare measures of the postwar era, this one discovers that the poor are too difficult and too expensive to cope with. To do something substantial about their plight would disturb far too many interests, among them the construction unions happy with their discriminatory apprenticeship policies; banks which are unwilling to make loans for low-cost construction; homebuilders frightened by the prospect of a massive public addition to the housing stock; landlords no longer able to count on a tight housing market as the sufficient reason for poor maintenance and rent gouging; and respectable middle-class citizens of areas like Queens, worried about an influx of Negroes and Puerto Ricans coming to live in public-housing projects. There is nothing in the Johnson program, either in its size or its shape, which menaces any of these vested interests. It represents perfectly the consensus of the successful—the middle-class welfare state in action.

THERE are warnings to be posted even about the impending triumph of medicare. In the form that it has been given in the House Ways and Means Committee by Congressman Mills, the administration bill (HR 6675) is an omnibus measure which increases Social Security benefits by 7 per cent, expands the Kerr-Mills Act's assistance to the indigent aged, offers larger sums for child health and other welfare programs, and, of course, finally turns into legislation the Kennedy request for hospital treatment of the elderly under Social Security. But the bill goes yet further. It tacks on to the hospital aid provision a voluntary supplementary insurance plan designed to cover many of the medical costs of treatment at home and in physicians' offices. The central provisions of the basic plan extend hospitalization benefits up to 60 days for each illness and post-hospital care in nursing homes and the like up to 20 days for each illness; up to 100 home health care visits by nurses or other qualified people may also be made in each year. This voluntary plan, originally proposed by Republican members of the House Ways and Means Committee as a substitute for the administration scheme, pays 80 per cent (after an annual deduction of \$50) of the costs of medical and surgical services provided in hospitals, clinics, homes, or offices.

In 1967, the first full year of operation, the whole medicare program, according to admin-

* See also "The Failure of Urban Renewal" by Herbert J. Gans in last April's COMMENTARY.

istration estimates, will cost about \$6 billion—\$2.2 billion for the basic health care plan, an additional \$1 billion for the supplementary plan (on the assumption that 80 per cent of those eligible will participate), \$2.3 billion for increased Social Security cash payments (retroactive to January 1 of this year), and the remaining \$500 million for the expansion of existing public assistance programs.

WHEN the American Medical Association loses a battle, men of good will rejoice. In this instance jubilation might appropriately be moderated by the reflection that the AMA did not after all come away quite empty-handed. The hospitalization provisions specifically exclude the fees of diagnosticians and consultants: only the services of interns and residents on the regular hospital staff will be free to the covered patient. Coverage, moreover—particularly of psychiatric disorders—is limited. Nor have the private insurance companies, frequently the allies of the AMA, quite lost their lucrative share of the health protection business, for the measure as it stands directs the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to contract out much of the administration of the voluntary program to the insurance companies, including the calculation of rates of payment and the actual disbursement of benefits.

Throughout, the financing of the program is exceedingly conservative. Thus premium rates on the voluntary plan will rise with medical costs. Judging by the postwar history of Blue Cross rates, the elderly must look forward to a rapid increase in the \$3 monthly premium. Other portions of the program will be financed overwhelmingly by increases in payroll taxes—which will reach 5.5 per cent *each* for employer and employee by 1980. And these taxes will be levied on the first \$6,600 of income instead of on the current \$4,800. This is bad because payroll taxes are what is technically called regressive in the sense that as incomes go up, the percentage paid in tax declines. But that is not the worst of it. If the current bill sets the precedent of dependence on payroll taxes, it will be very difficult to extend the benefits of this program to other age groups, for any further increase is likely to be resisted by workers, on whom the major burden would fall.

Of this Congress's unusually long legislative agenda, the Education Act may in the end prove the most significant item. Certainly as a feat of applied legislative magic, it has no contemporary rival. Mr. Johnson has granted enough to parochial schools to elicit such words of praise from Catholic quarters as *America's* comment that "this law is more than a milestone in the progress of education in the United States. It is a distinct turn in the road which opens new vistas." In the new Act, *America* sees a "promise

for the future of a truly pluralistic school system." On the other side, the President has moderated the opposition of many antagonists of past proposals to assist parochial and private schools, and even to convert a number of them, by putting assurances into the Act of public-school controls over shared-time instruction and public-school ownership of textbooks. It must be said further in the Act's favor that the allocation formula promises rather more to the big cities than Congressional custom usually allows.

The President's triumph represents not the solution but the disposal of a church-state issue which, it had become increasingly evident, neither of the major contending parties—Catholics or militant separationists—was strong enough to settle on its own terms. Now that federal aid to education on a general basis has begun, it can only increase. The issues which remain have to do with the emerging shape of public and private education in America. The shared-time provisions of the Act (under which parochial schools will be allowed to use such public-school facilities as science laboratories, woodworking shops, and gyms) will relieve the financial strain on Catholic, Lutheran, and other church-financed schools. Whether this tangible assistance will stimulate the expansion of existing religious schools and even the establishment of new ones is an open question. If this should turn out to be the outcome, American education may come to approximate the Dutch tripartite division among Protestant, Catholic, and secular schools. Some, welcoming the prospect, will emphasize the diversity of choice offered. Others, devoted to the primacy of public education, will stress the dangers of fragmentation in the new situation. At a minimum the Johnson program has introduced a major educational uncertainty. At the maximum the unintended consequence of Presidential success in bypassing the old and acerbic church-state argument, may be a transformation of elementary and secondary education as we have heretofore known it in the United States.

THE PRESIDENT's rather remarkable message on Natural Beauty fits snugly into the familiar pattern. The sentiments are admirable. To cope with blighted cities and ruined countrysides "will require a new conservation. We must not only protect the countryside and save it from destruction, we must restore what has been destroyed and salvage the beauty and charm of our land. Our conservation must be not just the classic conservation of restoration and innovation. Its concern is not with nature alone, but with the total relation between man and the world around him. Its object is not just man's welfare but the dignity of man's spirit." This is good rhetoric and it is bolstered by some good proposals. The President seeks to regulate billboards and disperse junkyards, construct additional parks, improve

wilderness trails, beautify commercial districts, and so on.

But what of the critical conservation problems—those involving the sort of water and air pollution which affects the costs and the profits of the manufacturers who dump industrial wastes into flowing streams, the public utilities which deface sites noted for their beauty, farmers whose promiscuous use of insecticides menaces fish and people, landlords whose chimneys belch black smoke, and auto manufacturers whose proud products emit clouds of pollutants into the air? As one scans the message anxiously for solutions to these problems, one finds a disquieting emphasis upon that contemporary synonym for inaction, “research.” Here is the President on pesticides:

In order that we may better understand the effects of these compounds, I have included increased funds in the budget for use by the Secretaries of Agriculture, Interior, and Health, Education, and Welfare to increase their research efforts on pesticides so that they can give special attention to the flow of pesticides through the environment. . . .

. . . the 1966 budget includes funds for the establishment of university institutes to conduct research and training in environmental pollution problems.

We need legislation to provide to the Departments of Agriculture and Interior authority for grants for research in environmental pollution control. . . . I have asked the Secretary of Interior to submit legislation to eliminate the ceiling on pesticide research.

Mr. Johnson must be making new friends in the science departments of every state university in the land.

IV

SUCH is social welfare, business-style, social welfare on the cheap. If the aim is consensus forever, quite possibly the Johnson approach will be successful. But if the aims are restoration of the cities, integration of minorities into the labor force, relief of youth unemployment, elimination of the culture of poverty, and solution of the complex problems of matching the skills of the labor force with tomorrow's demand for labor—then the approach must fail. That a few will benefit there is no reason to doubt. The youths trained in job camps, the small number of adults retrained under the manpower retraining programs, and the families moved to better homes will have reason for gratitude. For the rest, however, it will be possible to take the President's program seriously when the vacancy rate in Manhattan begins to rise. And it will be possible to take it even more seriously when the poor begin to stir on their own behalf.

On one level the difference between the President's limited recommendations and a genuine assault upon poverty and alienation is the difference between a little money and a lot of money; on another level it is the distinction between business as usual and business harnessed to social objectives; on still a third level it is the contrast between a commitment to enlarge the size of the economy and the intention to improve the quality of the society. Although there is no special reason to condemn a conservative politician for choosing the path of conciliation, there is every reason to avoid confusing rhetoric with the program of social action that is desperately needed.

Civil Rights

BAYARD RUSTIN

TOM KAHN

WHEN LYNDON JOHNSON goes before a joint session of Congress and proclaims that "We Shall Overcome," how is the civil-rights movement to react? And when, in the same speech, he pays homage to demonstrations as a wellspring of legislative progress, what is the civil-rights movement to say? Ironically, a movement whose only hope is political power is deeply discomfited when power speaks in its name.

It is not hard to understand why. "We Shall Overcome" has been rendered almost sacred by the hostile and perilous circumstances in which thousands have had to sing it. Thus a nervous tremor passes through militant sections of the movement when these words are uttered by the President of the United States, and its salient feature is fear of "pre-emption." As a generation, we of the movement are sophisticated in the means employed by "power structures" to manipulate consent and deflate dissent. Sometimes, however, we become too sophisticated, and our sophistication gets in the way of serious analysis. Beginning with a recognition of the cynical abuse of slogans, we end up acquiescing in the separation of language from reality; we fail to understand that abuse has directions and words have actual consequences in the real world. Those civil-rights militants who are suspicious of Lyndon Johnson's new identification with the movement because they doubt his sincerity are being irrelevant. Of the President's personal qualities which *are* relevant to his role in the civil-rights struggle, the aspiration to historical greatness is probably paramount. By all accounts, Lyndon Johnson wants to go down as a great President. The question is, what serves this aspiration?

The opportunities for greatness are limited in any President's tenure. Given the broad forces at work on the international scene, it is unlikely that Johnson can make himself known to history as the President who brought about world peace. This is not to say that the administration's foreign policies could not be drastically improved (witness

Vietnam and the Dominican Republic), only that the decisions relating to war and peace are not in the hands of one government, let alone one administration. But there are two other paths to greatness that lie open before the President: civil rights and the abolition of poverty. The two are, of course, one—not only in the sense that Negroes cannot be free if they remain poor, but also in the practical sense that both objectives face the same line-up of political forces.

Greatness comes to statesmen from the way in which they respond to the issues forced upon them. Rarely, if ever, do they themselves *create* the genuinely momentous questions of their times. The momentous domestic question of our time has been created by the civil-rights movement. Johnson's critics on the Left who begrudge him the esteem of historians must therefore accept the fact that we have constructed his launching-pad to greatness; it is rather too late to do anything but hope and urge that he use it. The more effective the pressure brought to bear on him for change, the higher he will rise. Certainly the same process operating on President Kennedy had this result. Although he opposed the Freedom Rides, they eventually led him to enforce the ban on discrimination in interstate travel, a decision which contributed greatly to his stature. Similarly, the demonstrations in Birmingham prompted Kennedy's introduction of what became the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the March on Washington, the need for which he had initially questioned, assisted in the passage of that Act, assuring his place in history.

Precisely because Johnson is a consummate politician and acutely sensitive to pressures, he mirrors the civil-rights movement's real strength at any given time. No independent idealism colors his language and actions; no heavy philosophical biases cloud the image of us which he reflects back. Men weighted with such biases can create illusions. But the mirror-politician furnishes a valuable service. He lets us know that what we have won is what our relative power has entitled us to; no more, no less.

Thus the President's speech on voting rights mirrored the impact of the Selma-Montgomery march, whose political potency can be ascribed to the broad coalition of forces—including SNCC and

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other civil-rights groups, labor unions, Catholics, Protestants, Jews, students, and intellectuals—assembled under the leadership of Martin Luther King. What difference did it make that, in chiding Congress for delay and compromise in legislating earlier civil-rights bills, he neglected to indicate that he, as Senate Majority Leader, had been a chief engineer of the compromises in 1957? There is no point in dwelling on the convert's past sins; *the point is to mount more potent coalitions of power to induce further conversions.*

JOHNSON'S VOTING speech alone was enough to secure his place in the history books. Not only is it the most radical statement ever made by a President on civil rights; it is one of the two or three most important Presidential pronouncements ever on the nature of social change. Indeed, one has to go back to Jefferson's defense of the right to revolution to find a comparably radical view of extra-parliamentary activity. While drawing distinctions among kinds of demonstrations, Johnson essentially admitted that Congress would not have acted to guarantee civil rights if Negroes had not taken to the streets. In addition to offering this defense of one of the movement's most vital weapons, Johnson warned Congress that even the enactment of his voting legislation would not bring an end to demonstrations, because deep-seated social and economic inequities would persist. This official declaration that the government is an ally of the Negro struggle, *even when that struggle assumes unconventional or extra-legal forms*, cannot but have a profound effect on the public mind.

The full psychological significance of the President's declaration can only be appreciated from the perspective of the last ten years. After all, it was not so very long ago that the advocates of direct action were waging an uphill battle for acceptance in the Negro community itself. (Of course, even now only a minority of the community is involved in direct action, but the majority no longer doubts its efficacy.) Such sweeping vindication customarily comes from historians; rarely does it come so swiftly. It should be fully exploited by the civil-rights movement to spur confidence and motion in the Negro community.

In challenging the Ku Klux Klan, Johnson also becomes the first President since Reconstruction to strike at a major cause of the exodus of Negroes from the South—racist brutality. Simultaneously the President is striking at a force which has combined terrorism and economic intimidation to suppress dissent within the *white* South. If the power of the Klan (and related groups) can be shaken, more white moderates should rise to the surface. While the outcome of this challenge to the Klan is still uncertain—surely a HUAC investigation into *anything* should inspire some trepidation in civil libertarians—the challenge has nevertheless been offered. Moreover, the federal presence in Alabama during the great march established an

important precedent. Granted such a presence will not be mobilized every time there is a march; but history was made, and it is harder to repudiate precedent than to make it. In any case, a new federal commitment has been enunciated, and that commitment lays the basis for new demands by the movement.

Again, Johnson's administration may be credited with having closed the gap between the executive and legislative branches on the one hand, and the judicial on the other. With the 1954 school desegregation decision, the Supreme Court became the target of right-wing attack. The courts are no less political than other institutions (though they may take longer to respond to pressures), and without executive and legislative backing it is doubtful that they could have continued to sustain a vanguard position. Only those unfamiliar with the history of the counter-revolution that overthrew Reconstruction will be unimpressed with the importance of consolidating civil-rights gains at all levels of the federal government.

As of early May, the administration's voting bill is in the Congressional hopper. Liberals are seeking to strengthen it, conservatives to dilute it. Not knowing which version will be passed, it is difficult to predict its impact. Chances are, however, that unless the conservatives have their way, the final legislation will be a major stride toward the "one man, one vote" principle. The effect of the bill will not be limited to the approximately one-hundred counties where federal procedures will be automatically triggered by virtue of fewer than 50 per cent of the eligible population having voted in 1964. Federal registrars will in time be sent into other counties as well, when this proves necessary. Furthermore, the new legislation will have a spillover effect on the attitudes of local politicians and of Negroes who *thought* they could not vote and will now discover that they can. In places like Tuskegee and Bogalusa, politicians have already begun to see the handwriting on the wall.

THE URGENT importance of the voting bill is not reduced by the fact that legislation alone will not register Negroes. To register Negroes is the job of the movement, not of the government. But it is a job that can be vastly facilitated and accelerated by legislation. To be sure, in Fayette County, Tennessee, where disfranchisement of Negroes was so notoriously maintained by economic intimidation, some 3,400 Negroes (only 200 below the white figure) have been registered even without legislation. But this is not an argument against passage of the voting bill. In Fayette County the problem has mainly been one of intimidation. In a state like Alabama, however, built-in procedural obstacles such as the literacy test have been the main weapon employed to prevent Negroes from registering, and it is these obstacles that the new legislation will go far toward removing. The bill

does not deal adequately with the problem of brutality, but this shortcoming should act as a challenge to the movement to find new means—including legislative means—to deal with that problem. The random acts of brutality committed by individual racists are ultimately less significant than the agonized violence which is part of the political institutions of the South. Our attitude toward the voting bill must be based on the recognition that the Al Lingoes and George Wallaces are more dangerous enemies of freedom than the Collie Wilkinses. In short, civil-rights supporters would be very much mistaken to adopt an all-or-nothing stance with regard to the current bill: still more legislation will inevitably be required as loopholes, shortcomings, and evasions become evident. Our ultimate goal, as Andrew Hacker argues so persuasively,* must be complete universal suffrage—the obliteration of all voting qualifications except age and sanity.

The value of the new legislation will consist primarily in providing the movement with a new framework and a more favorable climate in which to mount a massive registration campaign—as the Wagner Act provided an umbrella under which the CIO could organize workers. The movement must make its own political revolution (there being no other term to describe the consequences of enfranchising the Negro South). Governments as a rule do not engineer revolutions on home soil.

Assuming, perhaps too sanguinely, that the effort to subvert reapportionment fails, and that a strong voting bill passes, history will record that Lyndon Johnson presided over important shifts in the distribution of political power. The shifts could be purely mechanical and inconsequential in themselves. If the urban vote gains in relative weight but the ghettos remain unmobilized, and if Southern Negroes are registered but are divided or confused over strategy, then the potential for fundamental change will not be realized. In Selma and Montgomery the nation saw a magnificent example of the kind of mass action that can give flesh and substance to the skeleton of legislative reform. A movement capable of energizing such action need have no fear of “pre-emption”; only an impotent movement can be pre-empted. Those preoccupied by such fears must either view the felt needs of the Negro community as quite superficial or conceive of the movement as far separated from those needs. If the latter conception is accurate, then the only safeguard against pre-emption is a mass movement which responds to the real needs of the community and seeks to involve large numbers of people at varying levels of activity and commitment. By definition it is not a movement restricted to full-timers and true believers; it does not demand of every participant a drastic personal transformation; it welcomes and utilizes ordinary people who go on living ordinary lives.

LYNDON JOHNSON HAD the good fortune to reach the White House in the midst of a civil-rights revolution which would necessarily elevate anyone in power who responded positively to it. His response so far assures him a permanent place in history. But what of his future? Up until now, he has had to cope with the civil-rights movement's most simple and elementary demands. The right to vote and to have equal access to public accommodations is, after all, long overdue. This is the 20th century.

Beneath those elementary demands are the fundamental social and economic needs of the Negro community, without whose fulfillment civil rights are empty formalities. So enmeshed are these needs with the nation's basic ills that it becomes impossible to label them “Negro” or “civil rights.” They are tied in with the emergence of a new socio-economic order to which the administration has not yet responded with any comprehensive programs. Having described this problem elsewhere in greater detail,† we can be brief here: the fact that two-thirds of all Negro families live in poverty or deprivation is a consequence not only of the racist heritage but of trends in the national economy. The technological revolution—through the direct displacement of unskilled and semi-skilled workers and by creating a socio-economic order in which efficiency, education, and skill are paramount—is working to the disproportionate detriment of the Negro community. These economic trends underlie population movements which intensify the concentration of Negroes in central-city ghettos and subvert efforts toward de facto school integration. Fair employment is unrealizable in the absence of full employment, because Negroes are concentrated in the unskilled and semi-skilled jobs where the general unemployment rates are highest.

Our current levels of unemployment result both from “structural” changes and from inadequate consumer demand, but these two factors are really obverse faces of the same coin. The fruits of the rising productivity which our technology makes possible have not been evenly distributed; rather they have exacerbated the imbalances in our economy. The cash flow to corporations in the period 1953-1963 rose by 103 per cent, while wages and salaries rose by only 71 per cent. No wonder consumer demand falls behind our capacity to produce. No wonder that some 12 per cent of our plant capacity is idle and 8 per cent of our human resources waste away in unemployment.** Meanwhile, there are cities to be rebuilt, and crying

**New York Times Magazine*, April 23, 1965.

†See Bayard Rustin, “From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement,” *COMMENTARY*, Feb. 1965; and Tom Kahn, *The Economics of Equality*, League for Industrial Democracy, 1964.

**This figure is, of course, higher than official government estimates. It includes the full-time equivalent of part-time unemployment and those excluded from the labor force because they have become too discouraged to look for work.

needs for schools, hospitals, rapid transit systems, and the like.

Here we are dealing with underlying problems and processes that do not manifest themselves in sudden dramatic events (except in riots, perhaps), but have an erosive effect on the struggle for racial equality. They cannot be separated out of the civil-rights picture. For if they are so separated, the years ahead could conceivably bring steady progress toward legal and political equality for Negroes and, simultaneously, an intensification of racial violence, urban riots, and social disorder.

IT HAS BEEN said that Lyndon Johnson's historic mission will be the completion of the New Deal. Already he has established new federal commitments in many areas—poverty, health, education; indeed his State of the Union message was a lengthy catalogue of federal concerns. It has also been said that his chances of success are better than Roosevelt's because he has rallied a broader coalition, including elements of the business world, which was hostile to Roosevelt. There can be no question that much of Johnson's civil-rights record was made possible by his ability to maintain the confidence of businessmen in the midst of the racial revolution. (That the Community Relations Service should be located in the Department of Commerce is surely symbolic.) This confidence has been effectively utilized at the local and national levels.

It would be foolish, too, to overlook the change in racial attitudes in the business world in general. In numerous Southern communities, it is the businessmen who have initiated the organization of moderate sentiment. Not that this has more than a limited applicability to other problems. The dominant reason for the shift in business sentiment on race is that violence and social dislocation are not conducive to the smooth and profitable operation of a business enterprise, as a number of Southern communities (Little Rock and Birmingham, for example) have discovered to their economic detriment. Moreover, discrimi-

nation and segregation are rooted in an economic order which has restricted the development of potentially significant markets, and which it is therefore in the interests of business to change.

But other business and corporate attitudes remain unchanged. One may be permitted to doubt whether the kind of national economic planning and public works required to attain full employment and reverse the trend toward economic inequality will win the assent of *all* the elements in the Johnson coalition. Past experience suggests that this is not possible, that rougher political terrain is ahead. There is no path to social justice except through that terrain, however. The fundamental character of the President's performance in the field of civil rights will be determined by the character of the *whole* country when the journey is over.

The civil-rights movement also has a rougher terrain to travel through. Its own destiny cannot be divorced from that of the total society. Its ultimate character, too, will be judged by the degree to which it succeeds in prodding and mobilizing the forces for change in America, in compelling positive responses not merely from individual whites of good will, but from *organized power groups*. In sustaining motion, demonstrations will continue to be useful tools, as the Selma-Montgomery march illustrated anew. That the march was led by Dr. King, a signer of the by-now-famous moratorium statement, is the only necessary reply to those who, during the 1964 campaign, accused the Negro leadership of abandoning a proven weapon. What those critics may now come to understand is that in order to move both the President and the political institutions of the country, we need more than a single weapon. We need an arsenal. Lyndon B. Johnson's success in the fight for civil rights and against poverty will in part depend on how relevant the strategy and tactics of the movement prove to be. For the civil-rights movement is one of the few forces in American society today capable of acting as an effective social catalyst.

Foreign Policy

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM

IN THE AUTUMN of 1963 the international prestige of the United States stood higher than at any previous time since the end of World War II. Not all problems were solved, of course, and not all American policies were universally applauded, even in friendly quarters. Yet not only was American power recognized—nobody, even those who spoke of “paper tigers,” had ever really doubted the reality of that power—but there was a general expectation on the part of friend and foe alike that it would be used with reason and restraint. More than that: most of the uncommitted nations of the world, as well as America’s allies, felt that on the whole it would be used in the interests of justice and human dignity.

In the spring of 1965, the international prestige of the United States is lower than at any time within recent memory. There are, of course, occasional successes in the midst of the general debacle. But they are few. American power is indeed still recognized—but our allies are far more frightened by it than our antagonists. For it has now come to be regarded as the instrument of willful and irrational caprice, a destructive force mightier than the earthquake and with no more intelligent direction. Some governments which, because of their military or economic dependence on the United States, still give its policies public support, are pleading in private for their modification. And in countries such as Britain and Japan, the gap between official endorsement and widespread public condemnation of American actions is wide enough to be detected even by the State Department.

Not all the blame for the situation rests on the Johnson administration. In many areas of the world it inherited major troubles, whose significance was to some extent masked by the personal charisma of John F. Kennedy. This is particularly the case in Southeast Asia, where the faults of American policy—though perhaps no worse and certainly in some ways more excusable than in some other fields—are at the moment most glaringly obvious. While the ad-

ministration is less than ingenuous in claiming to be merely carrying out in Vietnam the policies of its last two predecessors, it is true that the United States first became involved in Vietnam under President Eisenhower and that its involvement was greatly expanded by President Kennedy. American intervention under Eisenhower was limited in scope and reasonable in intent. Eisenhower had rejected the Dulles-Radford proposal to use American air power at Dienbienphu, and the United States remained on the sidelines during the Geneva conference. That conference produced an ambiguous solution, under which interim governments were to be set up in the northern and southern halves of Vietnam, with a view to their unification by free elections. In the North, the Viet Minh regime of Ho Chi Minh, which already held the countryside, took over the cities of Hanoi and Haiphong. In the South, the former Emperor of Annam, the Bao Dai, a playboy who had for years oscillated between Ho and the French, was chief of state; a returned nationalist exile, Ngo Dinh Diem, was prime minister; the Saigon police (and rackets) were in the hands of a gang of river pirates called the Binh Xuyen, who had been entrusted with these preserves by the French; and large areas were controlled by the private armies of two eclectic religious sects, the Cao Dai and the Hoa Hao.

It is hard to believe that anyone took the provision for unification by free elections seriously. Separately, and at times in cooperation, the French and the Viet Minh had liquidated every indigenous political group—including the Kuomintang-oriented Dong Minh Hoi (the country’s oldest nationalist party) and the Trotskyists (who had won a majority in Saigon in the 30’s)—which might have competed effectively with the Viet Minh. Thus the Viet Minh undoubtedly expected that when “elections” took place, it would win by default. In the North, Ho’s party was in a position to see to it that no opposition group could function, and none did. In the South, despite the departure of 50,000 or so Viet Minh guerrillas to the North (in contrast to the several hundred thousand refugees who fled to the South), there did not seem to be any real competition. To the Viet Minh, the pro-

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vision for elections must have seemed a face-saving formula for the French; without question, the Viet Minh expected to be in full control of the country after a short delay, which Ho was willing to accept to avoid further fighting.

But Ngo Dinh Diem surprised both the French and the Viet Minh. He got rid of the Bao Dai, crushed the Binh Xuyen, and broke up the private armies of the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai. He also rejected the all-Vietnam elections the French had promised Ho. In doing so he had the backing of many nationalists who had been unwilling to support either the French or the Viet Minh, as well as of some who had been in each camp. He also had American political backing and economic aid, and the small amount of military help permitted under the terms of the Geneva agreements. Thus bolstered, he succeeded in establishing a viable regime, and the Communists were at first unable to mount an effective opposition to him. But despite a good start, his government failed to consolidate its position by carrying through a thoroughgoing reform program. Moreover, it rapidly degenerated into a personal—or more correctly, family—dictatorship, as his pathological distrust of almost everybody led him to rely increasingly on his brothers, especially Ngo Dinh Nhu, which in turn estranged him increasingly from the people. Hence the Communist movement in the South gradually gained strength, winning control of more and more of the country. By 1960 it felt strong enough to establish a central organization, the National Liberation Front.

UP TO THIS point the power and prestige of the United States were only peripherally committed in Vietnam. But the Saigon government, supported by the American military mission in Vietnam, contended that the Communist revival was based purely on terrorism (the State Department did not claim significant North Vietnamese intervention at this time), and that its suppression was a military problem which could be solved by more American aid. The Kennedy administration responded to this argument by sending in large quantities of arms and large numbers of American military “advisers,” ostensibly to teach the use of the arms but often in fact to use them.

An attempt was made to crush the Communists militarily, mainly by bombing the areas where they were active. But the principal victims of this policy were the peasants in such areas, and its effect was to make them hate the government even if they did not love the Communists. Then to this deterioration in the countryside was added the Buddhist revolt in the cities, followed by the overthrow and death of the Ngo's. By the time President Johnson took office, the scale and complexity of American involvement already had reached a point where no easy way out

existed. This involvement far exceeded the scope permitted under the Geneva agreements of 1954—which we had pledged to respect even though we had not signed them—and it entailed express or implied commitments on our part which made withdrawal extremely difficult. Our position was made no easier by the fact that it was not clear to whom we were committed, to what extent our commitments might already have been violated in connection with the overthrow of Diem, and what new commitments that coup involved. At the same time, it was also increasingly obvious that American intervention was not preventing the Communists from engulfing a steadily increasing area of South Vietnam.

For all this, however, the situation did not seem by any means irretrievable. In Laos, where in the latter days of the Eisenhower administration our implication had been growing deeper and more unsavory, a reconvened Geneva conference had already achieved an agreed balance of forces under what was ostensibly a coalition government. Granted that there was a large measure of pretense in the Laotian agreement, and that what was nominally a coalition actually amounted to a *de facto* partition, this agreement nevertheless enabled the major powers to back away from a confrontation without sacrificing either principle—if any was involved for any of the parties, which seems doubtful—or any basic political or strategic positions. Though the two situations differed in many ways, the Laotian compromise did appear to offer a possible approach to a solution for Vietnam. In South Vietnam itself, the rise of political Buddhism meant that for the first time in several years, there was a non-Communist mass organization capable of playing a role in a popularly based government. In addition, the international climate when Johnson first took office was favorable to fruitful negotiations: the Soviet-American rapprochement had already borne fruit in the test-ban treaty, China was politically weakened by her conflict with India, and the failure of de Gaulle's intrigues with Ngo Dinh Nhu had rendered him less likely to make trouble. The natural forum for such negotiations was a reconvened Geneva Conference. North Vietnam and China were ready to come to the conference table, and the Soviet Union was urging the British to join with them in summoning it. Neutral states also supported the proposal.

But the United States was not ready to negotiate—and as long as the United States was unwilling, the British would not participate in any initiative. So no conference was held. Indeed, the United States refused repeatedly to agree to Prince Norodom Sihanouk's request for a conference to guarantee Cambodia neutrality and territorial integrity, lest the subject of Vietnam somehow slip into the discussions. And when around the beginning of 1965, North Vietnam

indicated, through U Thant, that it was ready to talk privately with the United States on a bilateral basis, the Johnson administration also rejected this form of negotiation. Instead, it prepared to intensify the war and to extend it by bombing North Vietnam. (Even earlier, American planes began to attack Communist-held areas of Laos, in violation of the 1954 and 1962 agreements, with the reluctant consent of Premier Souvanna Phouma. Here an excuse was furnished by Communist refusal to let the truce commission investigate renewed fighting between the Communist forces and Souvanna's neutralists.)

The official and semi-official arguments for the American refusal to negotiate in any forum and on any basis centered on two points: that there was nothing to negotiate, and that we could not possibly negotiate successfully as long as the political and military situation in South Vietnam remained so unfavorable. (This was a form of the doctrine of "negotiation from positions of strength" enunciated by Dean Acheson when Secretary of State and used by him to avoid negotiating anything.) Unofficially, it was no secret that there were people in the Pentagon, the CIA, and such subsidiary organizations as the Rand Corporation who were itching for a chance to try out their bright new theories of counter-insurgency strategy, and to practice gamesmanship with real weapons instead of computer tapes. There was also a school of thought, with especially strong support in the Strategic Air Force, which regarded the Vietnam situation as a splendid opportunity to guide events toward a "confrontation" with China that would furnish a pretext for loosing our nuclear weapons on that country before it had any of its own.

During the 1964 election campaign, the ideas of these groups kept oozing out through Goldwater's speeches. The reaction of the great majority of the public was one of fear and horror. President Johnson took full advantage of it and the scope of his victory reflected the widespread view of his opponent as a reckless and irresponsible adventurer who might plunge the country into a major war. At the same time, the President avoided any commitment as to the policies he himself intended to pursue.

IN VIETNAM ITSELF, during the campaign, he continued to increase the flow of American "advisers" dropping napalm and leading troops. Then in August, the Navy, on the basis of some rather ambiguous radar blips, reported that two of its destroyers had been attacked by North Vietnamese torpedo boats in the waters between North Vietnam and Communist China. Johnson responded to this report by ordering the bombing of North Vietnam's torpedo boat bases in "reprisal." At the same time, he let it be known that he had overruled those who wished to extend the bombing to other North Vietnamese targets. And he

used the occasion to get from Congress a resolution authorizing him to take such action as he might deem necessary in the area.*

Whatever the facts in regard to the attack on the American ships, the air raids on North Vietnam constituted aggression under international law. The United States itself had helped to establish the numerous precedents on this point in such cases as the French raids on Tunisian border villages during the Algerian war and the Arab and Israeli border raids and counter-raids. During the Greek civil war, we had been careful to discourage our Greek protégés from crossing the borders of neighboring states in their pursuit of guerrillas based there. There was very good reason for this general condemnation of reprisals. Few nations had ever undertaken aggressive war except on the pretext that they were retaliating for previous attacks; Mussolini had used this excuse in Ethiopia and Hitler in Poland. (So had the United States in the Mexican War, when Representative Abraham Lincoln challenged the President's statement that the U.S. had been attacked on its own soil.) Nevertheless, the raids found many defenders, both in the United States and abroad, even among people who were in general critical of American policy in Vietnam. Reprisals, while they violate international law, are practiced by so many states and so frequently that they have little shock effect as long as they are carefully limited, as the American raids in August appeared to be. Occidental opinion allows great powers considerable leeway where "face" is involved. Moreover, partisanship for Johnson as against Goldwater was so intense among precisely those in the United States and elsewhere who would have been most likely to criticize, that most of them hesitated to express their dissent.

But the systematic bombardment of North Vietnam that began in February of this year encountered no such tolerance abroad. At first, indeed, friends of the United States defended the attacks as reprisals for specific Communist acts like the bombing of American installations at Pleiku. But even this frail reed—frail because the United States never even attempted to demonstrate a connection between North Vietnam and the attacks on American installations—was lost to them when Washington announced that the attacks on North Vietnam would continue irrespective of any specific acts on the part either of North Vietnam or the South Vietnamese Communists. The assertion that the purpose of the bombing was to stop the flow of arms from

* President Eisenhower had, with Mr. Johnson's able assistance, secured a similar resolution in regard to Formosa. The legal status of such resolutions is doubtful. The Supreme Court has made it abundantly clear that Congress cannot, by sweeping delegation of authority to the executive constitutionally divest itself of powers considerably less important than that of declaring war.

the North to the South Vietnamese Communists could scarcely impress any informed person, since it was well known that the great bulk of their weapons was of American manufacture, obtained by capture, or sometimes brought by deserters from the South Vietnamese army or purchased from government soldiers. (The figures in the American White Paper, intended to show North Vietnam's involvement in the South, indicated that only about one weapon in forty captured from the guerrillas was of North Vietnamese origin.)

The American case was not helped, to say the least, by the news that the United States had supplied, and the South Vietnamese airforce had used, nauseating gas in some areas where guerrillas were believed to be mixed in with the civilian population. Although there was no direct connection between the question of gas (which had been employed only in South Vietnam) and the bombing of the North, the worldwide uproar over gas probably played a part in persuading the United States to reverse its position on negotiation. Previously, pleas by the Pope, U Thant, and others had been met with the assertion that no negotiation was possible until North Vietnam ceased all aid to the guerrillas in the South and agreed to abstain from any interference in South Vietnam's affairs. But in his Baltimore speech of April 7, the President offered unconditional negotiations and for the first time spoke, even if vaguely, of the terms on which peace would be possible. The initial world reaction was good, both to the general offer of negotiations and to the President's proposal for a comprehensive development plan for the entire area. But much of the gain was quickly dissipated, as State Department sources explained that we would *not* negotiate with the South Vietnamese Communists, the people who were doing the fighting. (In his press conference of April 27, the President stressed his readiness to negotiate with any *government*.) Thus it appeared that one precondition we were setting for negotiations was a North Vietnamese acceptance of responsibility for the Southern rebels, though there was no certainty that the North Vietnamese could commit the Southerners to a settlement even if they wanted to. It was noted that, although President Johnson spoke of a settlement based on the Geneva agreements of 1954, he also asked guarantees for an independent South Vietnam, whereas the Geneva agreements had provided for the country's unification by free elections.

Perhaps most important, it soon became clear that the United States would not cease bombing North Vietnam, even temporarily, to create a favorable climate for negotiations. In the eyes of many this threw doubt on the sincerity of American peace proposals. It certainly decreased the likelihood of negotiations; the North Vietnamese, who had indicated a readiness to negotiate before

the bombings started, showed no signs of being willing to talk while bombs were falling on them. The reasons for this were well stated by John Kenneth Galbraith in a letter in the *New York Times* of April 27.

Those of us who were responsible for air intelligence in World War II learned that bombing, without exception I believe, hardened the morale of those under attack. This, and the difficulty in seeming to yield while under attack, means that the raids undercut the offer of negotiations by the President. And so long as they are not directed at cities, something that the President has scrupulously resisted, they are of slight effectiveness. Light weapons and supplies passing along jungle supply routes are all but invulnerable and, in any case, the Vietcong depends heavily on local resources. Finally, and most important, the attacks are alienating our friends in Asia, Europe, and Africa and quite possibly strengthening and consolidating our opposition.

The bombings also serve, in the Communist and uncommitted countries, as an argument for the Chinese contention that the United States is the implacable enemy of all revolutionary movements, and against the Soviet contention that peaceful co-existence is possible. It can scarcely be doubted that, from Peking's point of view, the advantages of continued American bombing of North Vietnam far outweigh any damage to that country. An extension of the bombing to the cities and factories, whatever harm it might do North Vietnam, would for Peking simply be an escalation of the benefits it is already reaping.

II

IN VIETNAM, the Johnson administration inherited the burden of past errors. If it escalated defeat toward disaster, it had a mess to start with. Moreover, the proximity of Communist China, whose shadow hangs threateningly over the area, sharply limits the possibilities of maneuver there.

In Africa, however, a basically good situation has deteriorated seriously as a direct result of a shift in American policy. President Kennedy recognized and respected the desire of the new nations of Africa to seek their own solutions for their own problems, and to avoid involvement in power and ideological conflicts which had little perceptible relevance to their needs. Economic aid was geared to the opportunities for its effective use, rather than to ulterior political goals; if its scale was small, this was at least partly due to the fact that proper planning required time. Above all, the United States supported the desire of the African nations to keep the cold war out of their continent. In the Congo the Kennedy administration backed the efforts of the United Nations to establish internal order and create the conditions for a viable independent govern-

ment, both by supplying technical assistance without political overtones and by expelling the white mercenaries on whom the Katanga secession rested. Without the support of the United States, the United Nations activity in the Congo would have been impossible. American policy was, it is true, not altogether unambiguous. It was widely believed that the relations between some American agencies and General Joseph Mobutu—and perhaps President Kasavubu and others—had ramifications which did not appear on the surface. But whether or not this was the case, the general line of American policy remained one of encouraging Congolese independence *vis-à-vis* all outside forces, in cooperation with the UN and the other independent African states.

For this the Johnson administration substituted a policy of direct and unilateral American intervention. It often appeared that this policy was carried out primarily through the Central Intelligence Agency; in some instances the State Department seemed not to have been informed in advance, much less consulted. Thus in June 1964 the State Department denied that any United States pilots were flying planes against the rebels in the Congo, only to be forced to admit subsequently that this had indeed been occurring without its knowledge. Subsequently these pilots were replaced by Cuban exiles, a change which scarcely disguised the role of the CIA.

It is not clear what part the United States had in the return of Moïse Tshombe to the Congo and his replacement of Cyrille Adoula as Premier. Formally, the replacement was accomplished by Kasavubu with the support of Mobutu. Adoula, a former trade-union leader who was widely respected in Africa, had at least the public backing of the State Department as long as he retained office. But after Tshombe became Premier, he received American military aid on a much larger scale than that which had been given to Adoula in the preceding months. This aid mostly consisted of planes equipped with high explosive bombs and napalm, for use against tribal rebels whose weapons ranged from bows and arrows to an occasional machine gun. The pilots were not Congolese, and a key role in the ground forces fighting for Tshombe was played by Belgian, South African, and other white mercenaries, as in Katanga. The argument for this intervention, in what appeared to be partly a tribal struggle and partly a revolt against a corrupt and oppressive regime, was that the rebels were Communist-led. All available evidence, however, indicated that the rebel leaders had no ideological ties, but accepted Communist aid—which for geographical reasons was negligible in amount—because the foreign support of the central government left them little choice other than to take what help they could get wherever they could get it. It was, of course, possible that a genuine

Communist movement might thus develop where none had previously existed. Such things have happened before. To most politically conscious Africans, Tshombe and his Interior Minister Godefroid Munungo were the tools of Belgian financial interests and the murderers of Patrice Lumumba and many thousands of other opponents. The Organization of African Unity, representing all the independent African states, protested strongly against foreign military aid to Tshombe and sent a delegation to Washington to urge its discontinuance. President Johnson refused even to see the delegation; it did get to Secretary Rusk, but with no perceptible result.

ONE result of foreign military aid to Tshombe was that the rebels, who had at first been very careful not to harm the whites in the territories they held, began to threaten that they would treat these Europeans as hostages and make reprisals against them for the bombings. This in turn led to the American airlift of Belgian paratroops to Stanleyville, the rebel capital. The refusal of the rebels to permit the evacuation of European civilians, coupled with their threats, might have made some such operation inevitable from both a political and humanitarian point of view. (It is by no means certain, however, that the operation as carried out was effective in saving hostages; most of those who died seem to have been killed in panic as the paratroopers or mercenaries approached.) But there were certain aspects which were by no means inevitable and which aroused African anger. One such was the use of Belgian paratroopers, whose past record in the Congo gave the Africans no reason for confidence, and who in fact did (as reported by American journalists) murder Africans in cold blood. Another was the coordination of the supposedly non-political drop with a mercenary attack on Stanleyville, which made the drop an integral part of the seizure of the city. And perhaps most important of all, the drop took place while Prime Minister Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya was actually engaged in conversations with rebel representatives and the American ambassador to Kenya with a view to arranging the evacuation of the hostages. These negotiations do not appear to have been making much progress—the rebels insisted on a cessation of American military aid to Tshombe as a condition of evacuation and the United States rejected the demand—and might well have failed. But an attack without notice while they were still going on was not merely a personal insult to Kenyatta, one of the most respected African leaders as well as one of the most pro-Western; to many Africans it was a breach of faith that recalled Pearl Harbor. Every African nation felt, also, that a precedent had been set which threatened it directly. African resentment was further heightened by the apparent indifference of the Americans to the massa-

ces of Congolese conducted by the mercenaries and Tshombe's other forces in Stanleyville and elsewhere. And whatever the justification for the rescue under the conditions that existed, these conditions were themselves the result of American military aid to Tshombe. In giving that aid, the Johnson administration reversed the Kennedy policy of avoiding direct intervention in order to keep Africa from becoming an arena of great power conflict.

Various other acts of greater or lesser importance also helped to dissipate the reservoir of African good will built up under the Kennedy administration. Thus, when Tanzania expelled two American diplomats because of what seems to have been a misunderstanding, the United States responded by expelling a member of the Tanzanian embassy's small staff. Tanzania in turn recalled its ambassador from Washington. This sort of retaliation is, of course, customary in the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Whether or not it makes any sense even there, it is accepted. Since both powers have diplomats who are also attached to covert agencies, they take it in stride if the wrong man is expelled. But a nation like Tanzania, which has no CIA, looks at things a bit differently. Again, Africans did not regard it as a friendly gesture when President Johnson designated Charles Engelhard to represent him at Zambia's independence celebration, since Mr. Engelhard has large investments in South Africa and has publicly defended that country.

III

IN LATIN AMERICA the deterioration of the situation has been somewhat less uniform than in Africa or Southeast Asia; things were bad to start with and one may even find places in which some improvement has occurred. Tensions with Panama were notably reduced by a settlement of the flag controversy and a promise that the status of the Canal would eventually be revised. Relations with Mexico were unquestionably helped when, as a result of negotiations begun under President Kennedy, the Chamizal section of El Paso was returned to that country only a little more than a half a century after Mexico had won an arbitration award in regard to it. (According to one report from Mexico City, Mexicans with Yankee friends told them: "We're glad to take back the Chamizal, but if you try to give us back Texas, it will mean war!")

But the deterioration is nevertheless real. Under President Kennedy, the United States had established strong ties with the progressive forces in Latin America. Military coups still resulted in the overthrow of democratic governments, but the United States at least made its disapproval clear and pressed with some success for the

restoration of democratic institutions. The initial enthusiasm for the Alliance for Progress had subsided as it ran into practical difficulties; on the whole, its achievements were disappointing. But the Brazilian Northeast Development Authority, under Celso Furtado, was making exciting progress in a crucial area. Today Brazil is under a military dictatorship, installed by a coup which, if not instigated by Washington, received its immediate public blessing. Celso Furtado has been deprived of his civic rights and is in exile, while the Northeast Development Authority has been handed over to military men closely associated with the feudal magnates of the area. This country's Latin American policy as a whole has been presided over by Thomas C. Mann, long regarded in Latin America as unsympathetic to social change. The social objectives of the Alliance for Progress have disappeared from view along with any effort by the United States to strengthen democratic institutions among its southern neighbors. As a result, new force has been given to the contention of Castroites and Communists of various types that democratic reform in cooperation with the United States is impossible.

In Brazil the United States was only indirectly, if deeply, involved. In the Dominican Republic its role has been direct and crucial. In December 1963, three weeks after taking office, President Johnson restored diplomatic relations with that country (President Kennedy had broken them off after the military overthrow of President Juan Bosch). Various forms of aid were soon restored; by the end of March 1964, United States assistance was again in full swing and serving as an essential prop to the rightist junta through which the military governed the country.

But the junta failed to solve the economic problems of the country or to win the backing of a people who had voted overwhelmingly for President Bosch in democratic elections. In April 1965 revolt broke out in the army; with tremendous popular support the revolutionaries demanded the restoration of the constitution and the return of Bosch. The air force, headed by General Elias Wessin y Wessin (who had led the original coup against Bosch), resisted and, with its U.S.-supplied planes, bombed the capital. Wessin's troops were unable to break out of the San Isidro airbase; according to Tad Szulc of the *New York Times*, they were on the verge of surrender because of lack of food and other necessities when the United States saved them by sending in supplies.

The supplies accompanied the first wave of marines, ostensibly ordered in to rescue U.S. and other foreign nationals imperiled by the Dominican civil war. No foreign citizen had in fact been injured (the *Times* reported that the girls of the American Peace Corps were heroines to the revolutionaries, who until their evacuation "protected them as their own"), and the landing of

armed forces was in clear violation of the Charter of the Organization of American States as well as of the UN Charter. It aroused immediate protest in all the democratic countries of Latin America; Presidential statements and congressional resolutions denounced it in Venezuela, Chile, and Peru.

President Johnson's initial statement that the U.S. troops were not supporting either side in the Dominican civil war contrasted with reports that they were seizing key areas of the capital, the stronghold of the constitutionalist forces, and fighting side by side with the troops of General Wessin. In any case, the official United States line quickly shifted to an emphasis on the prevention of a Communist takeover. Since nobody except Wessin's clique dared to suggest that Bosch was himself pro-Communist, the assertion was made that the originally democratic revolution had been captured by Communists. On April 30, President Johnson declared: "There are signs that people trained outside the Dominican Republic are seeking to gain control. Thus, the legitimate aspirations of the Dominican people, and most of their leaders, for progress, democracy and social justice are threatened. And so are the principles of the Inter-American system." This sounded to most Latin Americans like a description of the U.S. Marines and their activities, but President Johnson clarified his meaning two days later with a statement that Communists had seized control of the revolution and that our forces were there to prevent them from taking over the country. (Reports from such correspondents as Peter Khiss of the *Times* continued to indicate the overwhelmingly democratic nature of the revolutionists, while Tad Szulc of the same paper pointed out that the U.S. intervention might have precisely the result it was purportedly designed to prevent.) As the Marines were joined by paratroopers, an OAS delegation arrived on a mission of mediation. Together with Papal Nuncio, it succeeded in arranging a cease-fire; this was, however, repeatedly broken as the paratroopers and marines seized a key bridge between San Isidro and the capital and otherwise expanded the area under their control. The result was to free the path to the city for Wessin's troops—although these reportedly were vanishing and leaving the front lines of their sector to U.S. replacements—and to divide and surround the revolutionists.

Anywhere in the Western hemisphere, the landing of Marines to interfere in an internal conflict would have been disastrous. In the Dominican Republic, it also recalled the previous occupation of that country by the Marines, who after years of "preparing the country for democracy" had left their protégé Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina as a legacy. No belated recourse to the OAS could undo the damage done by the new invasion and occupation. Indeed, the OAS resolution giving *ex post facto* sanction to the presence of U.S. forces was not only opposed by some of the most demo-

cratic nations in the hemisphere; it received the required margin only because the Dominican vote was cast not by a representative of the constitutional government but by the delegate of the deposed dictatorship.

Failures elsewhere have had minor repercussions in Europe, and important ones in the United Nations. In Europe their most important effect has been to strain relations between the United States and its allies; few Europeans trust American wisdom and restraint, or look to American leadership, as they did eighteen months ago. One reflection of this has been the increase in both the anti-Americanism and the international prestige of Charles de Gaulle. In the United Nations, this country's increasing isolation became more and more evident during the maneuvers over the peace-keeping costs. The wisdom of threatening to force the issue through a challenge to the Soviet right to vote was perhaps dubious from the start; few things could really have suited the United States less than a Soviet withdrawal from the UN. But this would have been the probable result of a victory on the issue by a small margin. Only a resounding majority for the American position could have produced a Soviet agreement to pay. Such a majority depended on the support of the new and uncommitted nations, to whom the peace-keeping functions of the United Nations are of major importance. But it was precisely these nations whom American policies in Asia and Africa were antagonizing during this period. The result was that support for the American position steadily eroded until at the end, when the American delegation took the lead in blocking an Albanian attempt to force the issue it had itself raised, there seemed little likelihood of even a simple majority behind the United States. Indeed, the American retreat contained another element as well: the international climate had altered to a point where peace-keeping functions in the hands of the General Assembly were at least as likely to be used against the U.S. as against the Russians. Like the Soviet Union and France, this country now wanted the protection of the veto.

IV

THE FAILURE of the Johnson administration in the international field has a number of causes. Some weaknesses which have been endemic in the conduct of American foreign affairs throughout the country's history have assumed new and crucial importance under contemporary conditions. Some situations have, by their own internal development, raised problems of continually increasing complexity. Inadequacies of personnel and of technical competence have played an important part. This is notably true in the field of intelligence. American intelligence agencies, whose reports are cited in

justification of the policies adopted and presumably contributed significantly to their adoption, have not only been consistently wrong in their predictions as to developments in the Vietnamese war, but have been repeatedly taken by surprise by political developments in Saigon itself. Similar things have happened elsewhere. It sometimes seems that the only revolutions or coups that do not catch the CIA napping are those in which it has a hand. But current American policy also suffers from fundamental moral and ideological weaknesses which, if not peculiar to this administration, are nevertheless more characteristic of it than of any of its recent predecessors.

In Asia and Africa all these factors have converged. There was no easy way out in Vietnam when President Johnson took office. Immediate and unconditional withdrawal would, in view of Ho Chi Minh's past policies, almost surely have led to a large-scale liquidation of his political opponents in South Vietnam. Even leaving aside the moral aspects of handing one's friends over to the executioner, the political effects in the United States would have been disastrous for the country as well as the administration. One need only recall the development of British public opinion in the months after Munich to realize that withdrawal followed by massacres would have gone a long way toward propelling this country in the direction of nuclear war. Some provision for those endangered was and is a prerequisite for any sound settlement in Vietnam. This might perhaps be accomplished by a new partition and a regrouping of populations. More probably, however, it would require the resettlement elsewhere (perhaps Brazil or Texas) of those who chose to leave. But this sort of settlement requires a limited holding operation, not escalation of the war.

Whatever the United States did in South Vietnam, the argument could at least be made that it was assisting the legal government. If this assistance took forms banned by the Geneva agreement, we had not actually signed that agreement. In attacking North Vietnam, however, we were clearly violating the Kellogg-Briand Pact and the charter of the United Nations—treaties which the United States had not only signed but initiated. We were also acting in a manner which was predictably certain to antagonize world public opinion and—the more so since the bombing started while the Soviet Premier was visiting Hanoi—to make relations with the Soviet Union more difficult in all fields. Our action could moreover have been expected to strengthen the pro-Peking as against the pro-Moscow elements in Hanoi, and the Stalinists in the Soviet Union itself. All these things have now in fact happened; a particularly ominous development is the recent new emphasis in the Soviet Union on Stalin's virtues.

That the President himself did not foresee

these consequences is not surprising; he has little background in foreign affairs, and his own primary concern—like that of most Americans outside a few seaboard areas—is with domestic matters. Sometimes, it seems, he is not even informed of what his subordinates are doing abroad. Thus he was not consulted on the use of gas, and on the morning after he stressed that the attacks on North Vietnam were not directed against the population, the South Vietnam Air Force boasted that it had set a residential area afire. Unfortunately, his foreign policy advisers are little better equipped. Dean Rusk may have been an excellent housekeeper for the State Department under a President who was determined to be his own Secretary of State, and superbly qualified to do the job. There is no evidence, however, that Rusk has any qualifications for the job of guiding American foreign policy. Secretary of Defense McNamara has the basic weakness of any computer; he has to be programmed properly. Programmed by John Kennedy, he could produce brilliant answers. Tom Mann, whose influence appears to be increasing all the time, has a Texas birthplace as *his* chief qualification; aside from that, he was on the staff of the late John Peurifoy in Greece and Guatemala when the latter was throwing the support of the United States to the far Right in both those countries.

BUT perhaps the most important influence on foreign policy today is the frame of mind that may fairly be characterized as Achesonism (Dean Acheson himself is an adviser to the President, and his personal influence is reinforced by the Bundy brothers, one his son-in-law and the other his biographer). The basis of Achesonism is a frank advocacy of *Realpolitik* in its grosser forms. Mr. Acheson himself has publicly urged that American foreign policy be based on power rather than morality, and that the United States disregard world public opinion as a factor in determining its policies. In this attitude, at least, he has been consistent. Both in the period before 1947 when he was the State Department's outstanding advocate of concessions to Stalin, and in the subsequent years when he was the prophet of the "hard line," he based his position on what he conceived to be the requirements of power; considerations of morality did not enter into it. Unfortunately for the United States, however, Mr. Acheson has always been an extremely unrealistic *Realpolitiker*. In the period before 1947, he overestimated the need for concessions and underestimated their "counter-productive" consequences; many of the decisions for which he was responsible in that period remain to plague us. Later, as a hard-liner, he made equally serious errors. It was he who decided to permit General MacArthur in Korea to drive across the 38th parallel and on toward the Yalu, despite warnings of Chinese intervention. In Africa he aligned the United

States with the imperial powers against the rising nationalist movements. In Europe he made France the keystone of his policies, and refused to negotiate for the reunification of Germany at a time when the Russians might have been ready to concede it in order to avert that country's rearmament.

Acheson has always grounded his policies in the belief that it is for the United States and Europe to act, and the other continents to be acted upon. In this idea he has not been alone; it has been the idea of most of those who have made American foreign policy in the past, though not that of President Kennedy or John Foster Dulles. It is not surprising that to a large part of the world this attitude looks like racism; and the policies of the Johnson administration in Asia and Africa have strengthened that impression. The bombing of North Vietnam, and the use of gas—even non-lethal—and napalm against villages in the South have revived the memory of Hiroshima and convinced many who had been our friends that the United States feels bound by no rules of law or humanity when its opponents are Asians. So, too, with our abetment of Tshombe's atrocities in the Congo. And so, too, of things unimportant in themselves, but of symbolic significance—the expulsion of a Tanzanian diplomat, the sending of Engelhard to Zambia, the abrupt cancellation of the Ayub and Shastri visits without regard to diplomatic niceties (European visitors have not been similarly treated).

ONE of the reasons for the rejection of morality in international affairs is a sort of devil-worship. The argument runs approximately thus: the Communists use immoral means, the Communists

are successful, therefore immoral means bring success and we on our side must not hesitate to use them. This attitude is not peculiar to the present administration; it has influenced American policy for a number of years past. John Foster Dulles regarded V. M. Molotov as the greatest diplomat of modern times, and his own diplomacy frequently showed the influence of that master, with unhappy results. The Bay of Pigs adventure was a product of the same sort of thinking, although after that disaster the Kennedy administration appears to have become much more skeptical of the thesis. What is wrong with the argument, of course, is that what success the Communists have had has been due primarily to the appeal of the ideas and programs they have had to offer, and to the deficiencies of their enemies. They have, indeed, had a notable capacity for ruthlessness, dishonesty, and disregard of international law. But on the whole these things have been sources of weakness, not strength. Hungary left the Soviet position weaker, not stronger; it seems scarcely questionable that the activities of Soviet spies in the United States did both the Soviet Union and the American Communist party a great deal more harm than good. But only the techniques of Communism are visible to people who are incapable of recognizing the force of ideas *per se*, or at least of ideas which they do not share, and who often cannot see the weaknesses which have toppled regimes such as Chiang Kai-shek's, because they partake of those weaknesses themselves. But if we are to persuade the rest of the world that we, and not the Communists, deserve its support, we must offer a better and not merely a more powerful alternative. Morality without power may end in frustration, but power which disregards morality is monstrous—and usually ends by destroying its own basis.

SELMA FRAIBERG

THE AMERICAN READING PROBLEM

IN 1955 a backward schoolboy called Johnny became the central figure in a national literacy scandal. Rudolf Flesch's *Why Johnny Can't Read* produced domestic ferment over such issues as phonics vs. "whole-word recognition," the controlled vocabulary, and reading texts. An exposé of primers turned up two vapid children named Dick and Jane whose ordinary discourse in fifty re-usable words would have unfitted them for the teaching of Yahoos. In the fever of reform a public-school system in Wisconsin restored the McGuffey readers in the early grades.

Anyone who has followed the Johnny story will know that Dr. Flesch's book was followed by a number of sequels. In Arthur S. Trace's *What Ivan Knows that Johnny Doesn't*, we meet Johnny in a post-sputnik academic joust with a Russian boy in which, grade for grade, he again goes down to shabby defeat. In *Tomorrow's Illiterates** (a collection edited by Charles Walcutt), Johnny is failed once more by consensus of a group of educators and a psychoanalyst. More recently Johnny made an appearance in the pages of *Partisan Review*: "Why Johnny Can't Write." This was a review of Lynch and Evans's *High School English Textbooks†* in which it was clear that the boy was getting deeper and deeper into academic peril. The reader who has followed Johnny in his downward path to wisdom must brace himself for the next volume in the series. If Johnny's instruction in phonics has removed the impediment to reading he may be a college freshman next year. The test is yet to come. He can sound out Raskolnikov. But will he dig big D.?

This decade of public commotion over reading methods and the teaching of literature has not yet produced major reforms. In *Innovation in Education,*** a collection of essays published last year, there are reports of sweeping curriculum changes in mathematics and the physical sciences. But nationwide research on the state of the curriculum in reading shows no significant changes

in methods or in the curriculum itself during the past thirty years.

The curriculum that embraces reading in the early grades, and language and literature in the later years, is an edifice that has extraordinary resistance to time, climate, assault by enemies, or abrasion through use. The durable siblings, Dick and Jane, have survived their national scandal in robust health and are still in business in hundreds of schools throughout the country. As it turns out, there are also about a dozen more primer series in current use in which pairs exactly like Dick and Jane (Alice and Jerry, for example) exhort each other to run, jump, look, and see in a controlled vocabulary of fifty words. Teachers who have worked with these texts have expressed their opinions to me in language that is rich in gastrointestinal metaphor. The durability of these primers, then, cannot be attributed to the support of educators alone.

The same conservative tendency may be seen in the secondary-school curriculum. For thirty years *Julius Caesar*, *Silas Marner*, and *The Ancient Mariner* have been interred in the common tomb of the tenth-grade curriculum. By some remarkable consensus of a long dead committee, this ghostly company was assembled in the 30's and the order for release or amnesty never came through. They were there when I was in high school; they are still there twenty-five years later. I had always thought that they were brought together on the basis of a local or regional taste (not necessarily that of tenth-graders), but I have since learned that they constitute a kind of sacred fellowship in the tenth grade of schools throughout the country. No man can now say why Caesar has greater glory in the tenth grade than the ninth, or why Silas was elected for martyrdom when the rest of the George Eliot canon went scot-free.

This conservative tendency might speak for the enduring values of literature, except that the curriculum confers immortality with lavish impartiality. In one tenth-grade curriculum that I

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* Little, Brown & Co., 168 pp., \$3.95.

† Little, Brown & Co., 526 pp., \$4.95.

** Miles, Matthew V. (ed.), Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, 689 pp., \$8.75.

reviewed, I found *Julius Caesar*, *Silas Marner*—and *A Lantern in Her Hand* by Bess Streeter Aldrich (a best seller of the 30's). In the seventy-two high-school anthologies studied by Lynch and Evans, the drama selections include *Julius Caesar*, *The King and I*, *Life with Father*, and a substantial number of radio and television plays that might have been lost to literature if it were not for the intervention of the anthologists.

How a work gets into a curriculum is not so difficult to explain. The job is done by a curriculum committee that may fairly be compared to an ecumenical council. Modernizing the curriculum—which is sometimes done when a new chairman of the department is appointed—is so debilitating to a faculty, so costly in personal enmities and wounds, that I have never known it to happen twice in the tenure of one chairman. All this means that once Bess Streeter Aldrich gets locked up in the tenth grade, there is no academic machinery for bringing about her release. A curriculum committee is dissolved after its work is done, but there is no provision for a parole board or a board of review to investigate cases that have been committed on the basis of insufficient evidence.

All this sounds formidable in itself in considering change, but the problem expands as we study the other agencies that are engaged in the making and preservation of the curriculum. The manufacture of primers, textbooks, anthologies, "workbooks," and audio-visual materials is a major industry which exerts an influence in the setting of a curriculum that is comparable to that of any intramural agency within the school system. For while every school system does its own job of selection of texts from the materials offered by publishers, there is extraordinary uniformity among the texts available. This uniformity is not the result of conspiracy but of compliance on the part of the publishers with educational shibboleths such as the graded vocabulary and the "grade level" of literary works. And since the writers and editors of all these texts are chosen on the basis of conventional qualifications, the textbook industry inevitably supports the most conservative tendencies in the system itself. Innovation or novelty entails a heady financial risk.

But it is not inertia and conservatism alone that stall innovation in the schools. The introduction of a new curriculum is an undertaking of the same magnitude as that of retooling an industry. Within any local school system, the product of each third-grade classroom, for example, must be interchangeable with that of any other third-grade classroom on the same track. An innovation has to be system-wide. New textbooks must be introduced and other textbooks must be rewritten. Teachers must be retrained. Certification standards for teachers are usually involved. And

with all this there must be agreement among the top brass regarding the need for, and extent of, curricular innovation. The seniority system practically guarantees that the top-echelon school people will not be innovators.

IT IS INSTRUCTIVE to see how major curricular reforms have been achieved in fields other than English. The much-publicized recent innovations in the teaching of physical science, for example, did not originate in the schools, but rather in the Physical Science Study Committee started in 1955 by Professor J. R. Zacharias of MIT.* The striking feature about the project (and the one that was ultimately responsible for its success) was the fact that the physical scientists took upon themselves the job of developing new materials. They did not seek massive backing from school people but operated from the first on the assumption that "only physical scientists could define the structure of modern physical science." The new materials were devised, tested in practice (with the cooperation of a few institutions, mainly in the Boston area), and revised over a period of years. In time, scientists at five universities in the North and along both coasts began to use the Committee's materials to instruct high-school teachers in modern physical science at summer and in-service institutes. Estimates indicate that by 1962-63 about a fifth of all secondary-school physics students were using PSSC materials.

While this approach cost the Committee some support among professional educators, it is questionable in my view whether any educational innovation of such magnitude could have been achieved in such a short time if the innovators had chosen any other route. And in this case it was the classroom physics teachers who tested the materials and who played an active role in bringing curriculum changes into the system.

So far no Zacharias has appeared to lead the English curriculum out of the wilderness. If one does appear, he will most certainly get into a jurisdictional dispute that may tie up things for another decade. For while the professors of physics may define "the structure of physical science," and even a school bureaucrat cannot argue the point, there is no parallel for this authority in the hierarchy of English scholarship and teaching. A Zacharias-for-English who emerged from upper academia with a mission to define the aims and structure of a public-school education in reading, language, and literature would have his credentials challenged before he reached Morningside Heights. For whatever his qualifications might be in "defining the structure" of a college English program, he would have no credentials in the pedagogical science that under-

* See "Scientists in the Classroom" by Martin Mayer, COMMENTARY, April 1963.

lies the public-school teaching of English. His academic views on the study of literature would be sternly challenged by another group of "definers," the curriculum-makers in the elementary and secondary schools. The public-school English curriculum is not seen by its makers as a formal course in the study of literature (even in high school it aims at little more than modest literacy on the student's part); they see it in terms of the acquisition of "reading skills," "the controlled vocabulary," "vocabulary building," the "grade level" of literary works, and the relationship of literature to the developmental needs of children. In all likelihood Zacharias-for-English would be deficient in these areas of pedagogical science.

To be sure, this emphasis on "reading skills" is not as arbitrary as it may seem. For it appears that much of the instruction in English during the first ten grades (and sometimes beyond) is still carrying the burden of teaching children and adolescents how to read—and by this I mean helping children achieve mechanical mastery of reading. The study of literature becomes incidental.

II

THE BASIC PROBLEM, then, is still reading, and thus the controversy over methods of reading instruction continues. Much of the primary teaching in reading still centers on "look-say" or "whole-word recognition." When the child shows initial mastery in the sight-reading of approximately 300 words, which may occur in the second or third grade, he is introduced to phonics; by the sixth grade, he is presumably equipped to sound out any new word he finds in print.

Proponents of those reading methods that employ phonics from the very beginning of primary reading instruction claim that their students can read 1000 to 3000 words at the end of the first grade. While it may be argued that this in itself proves nothing, there are some crucial problems involved. First, the rate of building a reading vocabulary is progressive, and there is strong evidence that the "look-say" readers lag behind, grade for grade, the students who receive early phonics training. For example, a typical fourth-grade reading text geared to the whole-word recognition method will use a vocabulary of about 1500 words. An instructional system that employs phonics from the start can work up to a 10,000-word vocabulary in the fourth grade, as Trace shows in his analysis of Soviet readers. But the real significance of the reading-vocabulary ranges comes through in the reading materials themselves. Even in the second grade a child with a reading vocabulary of 1500 words can be given selections that make no compromise with taste and engage his interest and imagination; and with a vocabulary of 10,000

words, a nine-year-old can tackle almost anything. But a vocabulary of 150 words condemns a seven-year-old to Dick and Jane, and the slow accretion of vocabulary in the next two to four years reduces him to the relatives of Dick and Jane or, at best, a simple stripped-down story that provides reading exercise but no exercise of the imagination.

The so-called "controlled vocabulary" that is built into the look-say method and the graded reading texts that are employed in most public schools have their own rationale. The teaching of reading through whole-word recognition requires that students memorize each word by the way it looks on the page, much as a Chinese student must learn his ideographs. Since the word must be recognized by its shape alone, each word in the text has to undergo hundreds of repetitions, and new words can be introduced only slowly. Mastery of reading through a look-say method is a prodigious feat of memory for the child in the early grades. The problems of "reading disability" which have grown out of this method are the subject of a vast literature, but I can testify as a clinician that a very high proportion of such failures can in fact be attributed to the method. Very often the remedial measures used for these non-readers consist of nothing more than the teaching of a phonics method. But even the child who survives the look-say system is frequently a careless reader who produces bizarre misreadings and approximations and eccentric spellings.

Whether or not a child becomes an adequate or a good reader through the look-say method is closely linked to social class. The reasons are very complex, but one factor can be weighed heavily: a child who has a home that provides incentives to reading can become independent of the quality or method of school instruction, independent of the stifling primers and the tedious workbooks that destroy the appetite for reading in the early grades. The child who must depend entirely upon his school for instruction in reading and incentives will not fare so well. And while primary-school educators argue strongly that the underprivileged child does not have "reading readiness" and that cultural factors have depressed his I.Q. and his potential for learning, the question of reading method comes back into the picture again. Those systems which employ a phonics approach from the start have a very small percentage of reading failures *even among children with I.Q.'s in the eighties and nineties*; nor does the social-class factor affect the ability to learn the mechanics of reading in those ways which are reported by the systems employing sight-reading methods. In *Tomorrow's Illiterates*, Walcutt claims that approximately one-third of young adults in America are "seriously retarded" in reading.

The question of whether today's children are

reading better or worse than children of forty years ago cannot be fairly evaluated, since instruments of measurement and systematic collection of data are themselves not much older than the system of reading that is in dispute. I found one item, however, which is sobering: Walcutt reports that during the revision of the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test in 1955 it was found that twelve-year-olds were reading on the average only as well as ten-year-olds had been reading twenty and forty years earlier, when the two previous editions of the same test had been issued.

The proponents of look-say have barricaded themselves behind a formidable wall of research findings which, they contend, support and justify the method. These findings, as well as the assumptions on which reading research has been based, have been given a rough going-over by a number of critics. Much of the early theorizing about whole-word recognition was derived from a Gestalt psychology that was badly mangled by the educational psychologists. In contemporary psychology, the theory collapses entirely. That which is seen as a single configuration, Donald Hebb (one of the leading figures in contemporary perceptual psychology) demonstrates, is actually achieved through an additive process in which the eye scans the figure but perceives it as a whole. The early proponents of look-say had correctly observed that good readers perceive words as wholes, then leaped from this observation to an untenable generalization—i.e., if good readers read whole words, then good readers can be made through teaching whole-word recognition.

PLETIES REGARDING research abound in the field of reading instruction today, but an independent analysis of this research by two social scientists (Barton and Wilder) shows that much of it is of low quality, conducted by poorly trained people, and is little influenced by findings in other disciplines. The elaborate teaching apparatus in the elementary-school reading program—the basal readers, the workbooks, the exercises, the building of “word attack skills”—is widely accepted by teachers as the sacred finding of research. But the reading researchers interviewed by Barton and Wilder seemed much less certain of their own product, and only a third agreed with the teachers on the scientific status of reading manuals.

A large part of the elementary-school student's time is devoted to the acquisition of “reading skills” through workbook exercises which are designed to develop mechanical mastery. They bore the young and add immeasurably to the revulsion against the subject, Reading. The scientific rationale of the workbook is dubious, but there is a consensus among teachers that they give wholesome occupation to two out of three reading groups during the time that the

teacher is working with the third. The question may fairly be asked whether the same amount of time spent in reading books might not produce a reader with the same or better mechanical skills. There is the common-sense argument that a story provides a bribe in reading that cannot be provided by an exercise book, that the child who simply reads books in quantity, following the lure of the story, can acquire “reading skills” effortlessly, quite unconsciously.

The effects of a reading program based upon a restricted vocabulary and simplified texts reach into all other parts of the curriculum in the elementary grades. The average child in the fourth grade with a reading vocabulary of 1,500 words must be provided with texts in history, geography, and physical science that do not tax his limited vocabulary and shaky mechanical skills. This means, of course, that the texts are severely restricted in content and that the diction is in a class with that of Dick and Jane. The poverty of these texts is tacitly acknowledged by the publishers who provide handsome color illustrations and attractive formats to lure the child into the bleak interior. The drab vocabulary and the mechanical rhythms of the prose have the effect of obliterating meaning and reducing all facts to the same order of importance. Thus there is a consistent downgrading in the teaching of all subjects to accommodate the limitations of the reading instruction program.

The effects of this downgrading are seen most clearly in the teaching of literature. As we have already noted, the problems of achieving simple mechanical skill in reading occupy a major part of the curriculum during the first six grades. The average child who has completed the typical fifth-grade reader has a reading vocabulary in the range of 2,500 words. He has been cut off from the best of children's literature and provided with a kind of subliterate sludge that may permanently impair his digestion of printed material. In all this time, he may have encountered no work of literary merit—a fact which cannot be blamed so much on his teachers as on the failure of our better stylists to write in a vocabulary of 50 to 2,500 words.

He may still be struggling with the mechanical problems of reading in the eighth or ninth grades, at which point the curriculum-makers introduce him to his literary heritage. In a typical eighth-grade anthology in a series called *Adventures in Literature*, the thirteen-year-old student will meet this extraordinary company: Longfellow (“Evangeline” and “Paul Revere's Ride”), Phyllis McGinley and Emily Dickinson, Charles Lindbergh, Robert Browning, William Shakespeare (“Under the Greenwood Tree”), Mary Roberts Rinehart, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and thirty-eight different writers of light verse, one-act radio plays, and sports stories whose names have not previously been linked with William Shakes-

peare. In this anthology Mark Twain is represented by a television play: "Tom Sawyer: The Glorious Whitewasher." Though Mark Twain thought he was writing a boys' book, his rating on the graded vocabulary list won't get him far with today's youth.

This brings us to the high-school years. In the seventy-two high-school English anthologies studied by Lynch and Evans, there are approximately 750 short stories of which only a fraction have any literary merit at all. The chief sources the anthologists draw upon are popular mass magazines, with the *Saturday Evening Post* and the late *Collier's* most favored, and *This Week*, *Woman's Day*, *Boy's Life*, *Seventeen*, *Ladies Home Journal*, and *Science Fiction* following just behind. Out of consideration for high-school students who are still struggling with reading, there are wholesale abridgements of stories in some anthologies in which the vocabulary, syntax, paragraphing, and even punctuation are simplified.*

THE NOVEL comes into these anthologies through excerpts (the first fourteen chapters of *David Copperfield*, the first 118 pages of *Great Expectations*, a little over one-half of *Ivanhoe*) which have themselves been subjected to drastic abridgment. In one of the anthologies intended "for students of average or superior ability," the excerpt from *Great Expectations* has been edited in the interests of a simplified vocabulary, and the adapter has rewritten whole sentences. Lynch and Evans point out that "Dickens's own words, some of which rank as sixth-grade words on the Thorndike lists, are sometimes replaced by what Thorndike classed as third-grade words, although the volume is intended for the ninth grade." In order to "speed up the plot," such passages in *David Copperfield* as David's recounting of his birth and the history of the caul have been deleted. *Silas Marner* is also pruned of descriptive passages that might bore the young.

Julius Caesar, abridged and updated, is still enjoying a long run in the anthologies. And while Shakespeare has so far survived the axe of the Thorndike word list, the adapters have freely translated his lines whenever Elizabethan usage taxes the sixteen-year-old reader. "Good morrow, Caesar" becomes "Good morning, Caesar." "That plays thee music?" is given as "That plays the music?" "Thou," "doth," "prithee," "'tis," "hath" are translated into modern English in many of the anthologies, notwithstanding dissonance or collapse of meter. The updating of the drama sections themselves results in the inclusion of works like Van Druten's *I Remember Mama*, Fletcher's *Sorry, Wrong Number*, Niggli's *This Bull Ate Nutmeg*, and Medcraft's *The First Dress Suit*. Only two of Shakespeare's tragedies (*Caesar* and *Macbeth*) are represented among the anthologies. *Hamlet* and *Lear* have both disappeared

from the required reading list. Mindful of the treacheries of the curriculum committee, the thought occurred to me that *Hamlet* was traded for *The King and I*, and *Lear* for *Life with Father*.

The poetry sections of these anthologies show remarkable agreement in the selection of works. Lynch and Evans note that some of the editors borrow from each other, textual errors included. Where time has not yet sanctified poetic merit, the judgment of the anthologists is both prudent and catholic. Among contemporary poets Auden, Eliot, and Spender have sparse representation. Dylan Thomas does not appear at all (Booze? Marital infidelity?). Dorothy Parker, Ogden Nash, Phyllis McGinley, F. P. Adams, and Louis Untermeyer have made it. So has Eugene Field, whose "Little Boy Blue" is included in five eleventh-grade anthologies.

The editorial apparatus of these anthologies is illuminating. Here, for example, are topics in one anthology suggested for twelfth-graders in connection with their reading of *Macbeth*: (a) a character sketch of Macbeth or of Lady Macbeth; (b) a letter Lady Macbeth might have written in answer to her husband's; (c) the doctor's report on Lady Macbeth's illness; (d) a pastoral poem.†

Classroom teaching follows the same pattern. I turned up these items from a teacher's manual in a major and top-ranking school system:

"The Necklace." Suggested topics for essays: (a) "On Being Honest." (b) "Things I have Lost." . . . "The Raven." (a) "A Weird Experience." (b) "My Parakeet's Vocabulary." . . . (Eleventh Grade) "To a Waterfowl." "Thanatopsis." (a) "I agree (disagree) with Bryant's philosophy." . . . "The Pit and the Pendulum." (a) "If Poe were alive today, he would be (would not be) an outstanding writer of crime stories." . . . (Twelfth grade) *Macbeth*. (a) "Compare or contrast Macbeth with a dictator of recent or current times." . . . "Locksley Hall." (a) "The World in 2060." "Take some single aspect of it. Consult your teacher." . . . "Song from Pippa Passes." (a) "I once felt just as Pippa does." (b) "I often feel as Pippa does."

One that I like best, and one that should give scope to the eighteen-year-old imagination, concerns "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love." Manual editor to teachers: "There are possibilities here for a composition based on very clever or very idealistic thinking, by having the student modernize the thought in the poem. For instance, if a young man today said to his girl, 'Come with me [sic] and be my love,' what would he offer her comparable to that offered by the shepherd?" This provocative question might easily

* These statements apply to texts which have been designed for use in all three tracks in high school-college preparatory as well as vocational and general.

† Reported by Lynch and Evans.

lead to a twelfth-grade riot if it were not for the foresight of the anthologists who keep an eye on these things. The deletion of the word "live" and the twitching of the meter at the amputation site will go unnoticed.

This "how would you feel if" approach is almost certain death to the imagination and to the appreciation of literature. The student is left with the feeling that the ultimate values of literature are attained through a mystic union with ravens and waterfowl. He is diverted from the task of taking a story on its own terms, taking the characters as given, and examining the problem as it is worked out in these terms. He is under the impression that it is he who imparts value to the work by liking or not liking, consenting or not consenting, and by having common ground with the characters: "I once felt just as Pippa does."

III

A FAIR percentage of the graduates of these programs in high-school English will go on to college. Here, in a last desperate attempt to consummate the marriage, the student and literature are brought together for a compulsory year or two. In all but a few institutions in the country (those that command the top secondary-school graduates) the first-year course in English is called Freshman Composition. Here a corps of young Ph.D.'s or not-yet-Ph.D.'s are assigned their first teaching labors. They must weed the freshman idiom of barbarisms and neologisms and clear out the underbrush in the wildly untended growth of entering-student prose. This is energetic teaching which involves the instructor in reading and commenting on 50 to 200 essays a week. Under the most favorable circumstances the student's exercises will produce a tidier exposition. But the faulty idiom persists like a tic, and after this year of rigorous study the habitual language patterns reassert themselves and cause consternation among the faculty in senior college and graduate school. In the faculty dining room the quality of student writing ranks next to the quality of institutional food as a topic that brings everyone warmly together. It is commonly believed that if the English Department were on the ball and drilled those kids in the elements of grammar and usage, these outrages would stop.

But formal drill in the language is not what these students need. As a matter of fact, the typical high-school curriculum in English includes killing doses of drill in grammar, usage, and mechanics. And since the medicine has no effect in the ninth grade, it is administered regularly in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades in the desperate hope that some of it will stay down. Jacques Barzun, speaking of his highly selected graduate students at Columbia, says ". . . I find one in ten who needs coaching in the elements

of literacy—spelling, punctuation, sentence structure and diction. And these students cannot write because they cannot read."

Barzun has not overstated the case. His estimate of one in ten gives Columbia a high batting average among graduate schools. Among undergraduates, even in our best schools, the student who does not require coaching in the elements of literacy is in the minority. And the reason is, as Barzun has put it, that *they cannot read*. A good reader's ear and eye have undergone a training that cannot be duplicated by exercises, teaching machines, or any formal teaching measures.

The year of freshman composition will not supply the missing elements in the student's preparation for reading or writing. If the student is lucky he may pass the rest of his years in college without writing another essay outside of the English department. The short-answer quiz has replaced the essay exam and the term paper in all but a few departments of undergraduate education, and with careful planning and course selection a student can receive his diploma without further examination of the state of his literacy.

In most colleges, a sophomore course called Introduction to Literature actually completes the student's obligatory education in literature. Since only a fraction of the student body will return for further study in the English department, this course represents the all-out effort of the curriculum committee to bring the world's great works together before time runs out. It has all the aspects of a funeral feast.

IV

THE ENTIRE CURRICULUM, from first-grade reading through high-school English, is a pretentious joke, of course. No one—not even the educationists—makes any serious claims for it. The only defense offered is that this is the best we can do in a program of mass education. European systems, our school people say, work with an academic elite, whereas ours must deal with a heterogeneous population, etc.; comparisons are therefore irrelevant.

Arthur Trace makes a grade-by-grade comparison of sample texts employed in our country in the teaching of reading and literature with those of the Soviet Union. Soviet students are taught to read according to a phonics system. Only a few weeks are devoted to the teaching of the Cyrillic alphabet and to practice in reading words and short sentences. The students then proceed to their first-grade reader, which has some 130 selections and a vocabulary of 2,000 words. The second-grade reader has about 165 selections and a vocabulary of approximately 4,000 words. This progression leads up to the fourth-grade reader which has longer selections and a vocabulary of

about 10,000 words. (A typical American fourth-grade reader has a vocabulary of 1,800 to 2,500 words.)

These Soviet readers include pieces aimed purely at Communist indoctrination and exemplary pieces (like those of our old McGuffey readers) aimed at character building, but they also include literary material of high quality from the first grade on. In the first-grade reader (for seven-year-olds) Trace found Tolstoy represented by three stories, two anecdotes, a fable, and a fairy tale; there were three poems by Pushkin, one fable by Krylov, a poem by Nekrasov, and one by Lermontov; there were many anonymous tales from the Russian folklore tradition; there were several selections by well-known contemporary Soviet authors. Altogether, Trace estimated that about a third of the selections in the first-grade *Rodnaya Rech* readers had genuine literary merit, and some were written by Russia's greatest authors.

In each of the successive readers the number of literary selections increases. Of the 77 selections in the third-grade reader Trace examined, more than half were of established literary value (stories by Tolstoy, Pushkin, Gorky, Chekhov, Turgenev, fables by Krylov, poems by Nekrasov and Pushkin).

In the fifth grade (age eleven) the Soviet student begins a formal study of literature on an elementary level. He is introduced to literary forms and the analysis of literary works. The organization of texts from the fifth through the tenth grades encourages a historical study of Russian and Soviet literature (not, however, in strict historical sequence) and a beginner's appreciation of the tendencies at work in the different literary epochs.

All of this is not as formidable as it sounds. The selections in the fifth through the seventh grade are often short—an excerpt from *War and Peace*, a Nekrasov poem, stories by Chekhov and Gorky, biographical sketches of the significant literary figures—but the emphasis is on the work itself. This program, in the hands of a good teacher, can provide the eleven- to thirteen-year-old student with an approach to the reading of literature. His eyes and ears can be educated to the elements of style, the qualities of language, and the repertory of literary values that give meaning to a work. The fifth-grade pupil in the Soviet Union will probably not get more than a rudimentary sense of these things, but he begins an education in reading that leads him into a full-scale exploration of major literary works in the eighth and ninth grades. The ninth-grade literature program, for example, includes Tolstoy's *War and Peace* in its entirety, Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and Goethe's *Faust, Part I*. As an indication of the thoroughness with which such works are studied, Trace points out that teachers are instructed to

spend fourteen class periods on Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* and twenty-eight hours on Tolstoy's *War and Peace*.

This curriculum, for an unselected population of school children, resembles in all essentials the curriculum in most European school systems which our educators have dismissed as "elite." Now it is very possible that a fair number of Soviet school children are bored or find the curriculum too demanding. It is very likely that the Soviet school system has some teachers who cannot measure up to the demands of such a rigorous program. And even with good teachers and good students there is no guarantee that a good curriculum on paper will produce the desired result. Nevertheless, a curriculum designed with these objectives provides a framework in which under optimal circumstances the elements of appreciation can be taught. The American public-school curriculum that I have described cannot, in itself, produce anything better than a market for the *Reader's Digest*. It is sobering to remember, too, that a great many of our teachers today—elementary and high school both—are themselves the products of this shabby education in English, an education which ends for a high proportion of them at the close of the compulsory college course, Introduction to Literature.

V

THERE ARE proposals for reform of the curriculum in English. And while they show zeal on the part of the agencies involved, they resemble in disconcerting ways a slum rehabilitation program. Since no one is willing to condemn the entire structure as unsound, the plans call for shoring up the sagging floors, patching the bad spots in the draughty upper stories, and surveillance to insure compliance with the minimum standards of the code. A proposal (by Lynch and Evans) to get rid of some of the undesirable tenants in the high-school anthologies has been criticized as unrealistic. Of course, if they were evicted there would be no place for them to go.

In a nationwide survey of teachers of English, the National Council of Teachers of English found that the average elementary teacher has devoted less than 8 per cent of his college work to English. About half of all secondary-school teachers of English lack college majors in the subject. One half of the secondary-school teachers responding to this survey rate themselves as not confident in their ability to teach literature and language; two thirds do not feel prepared to teach composition.*

In the face of these and other lamentable findings, the NCTE manages a brave face. Phrases

* See also "Freedom and Discipline in English," a report issued just last month by the College Entrance Examination Board.—Ed.

like "massive frontal attack" and other warrior slogans appear in the concluding section of its report. But as the section goes on, the metaphors of battle recede and the plan itself is disclosed in the idiom of the teacher's college catalogue. Such terms as "language arts," "basic language skills," "reading skills," "trends in content and methodology" break out like an old rash, and it soon becomes clear that the "massive frontal attack" will employ the same old strategies on a larger scale. The recommendations envision "a massive program of carefully planned summer and year-round institutes on the content of English . . . to improve the basic competency in English of the majority of elementary and secondary teachers now assigned instructional responsibilities in the subject." Courses in rhetoric and practical methods of teaching English are given highest priority in the NCTE's recommendations. But this emphasis on training in "methods" is hard to take seriously after 166 pages of information and statistics which show that a majority of our English teachers do not have even a rudimentary education in the subject. There is even some question as to whether they have any serious interest or pleasure in the subject they are teaching. Only 35 per cent of elementary-school and 44 per cent of secondary-school teachers rated courses in literature as "of great interest and value" for their own continuing education—although 67 per cent of the latter gave this rating to courses in "Practical Methods of Teaching English."

I will concede with the educators that "you have to begin somewhere" and that some form of large-scale in-service training of teachers is urgently needed. But such a training program needs to take a hard look at the facts. A teacher who does not regard his own study of literature as "of great interest and value" will not profit from a course in the methods of teaching literature. And if this absence of interest is reflected in his own reading, he will not profit from a course in rhetoric, or "language skills," or grammar and usage.

No one can argue against an effort to raise minimum standards, but I regret that the NCTE has not made equally strong recommendations for the raising of the maximum standards that now prevail. An investment of millions of dollars in the postgraduate education of several thousand good teachers of English with demonstrated capacity and qualifications might elevate the low ceiling of the curriculum and start some fresh currents moving. And here I do not envision "methods" and "language-arts" courses taken in night school, but a rigorous, full-time, fully subsidized postgraduate program in English in which study of the language and study of literature are at the center. Also, it goes without saying that if we want to prevent the complete decay of instruction in English, the whole system of

undergraduate training of teachers will have to undergo a revolution.

But teacher training alone does not hold the key to a revitalization of the English curriculum, and even a corps of topnotch teachers will not be able to work effectively within it as it stands today. There is no part of this curriculum that can be singled out for repair. It all hangs together, from the first grade through the twelfth, a dilapidated structure based upon bad reading, poor instruction, repellent texts, and a degraded literature. The entire structure must be rebuilt. Sending teachers to summer school, renovating textbooks and anthologies, reforming the program in rhetoric or grammar or literature will all prove futile if a substantial part of the school population is struggling with the mechanics of reading throughout most of the twelve years of compulsory education.

There are few signs that such a wholesale reform of the curriculum will be initiated by either the schools or the professional organizations of English teachers. While the spirit of reform is running high in English education today, the proposals that have come to my attention are mainly in the direction of technological innovation. The use of electronic devices, teaching machines, and language laboratories are widely endorsed "to supplement the efforts of the classroom teacher" in the instruction of reading, spelling, and certain aspects of grammar. We may expect to spend millions on such devices in the years to come. The very fact that they can be seriously offered as solutions to our national literacy scandal tells us how far removed we are from understanding the psychological base of language learning, in which I include learning to read.

PSYCHOLOGICALLY, the acquisition of speech and the process of learning to read are intimately related. Both derive from a human center. In the absence of human connections, the child will not acquire speech. By this I mean something more complicated than the self-evident fact that the child who does not hear human speech cannot learn to reproduce it. In the absence of human ties, of human partners, a child will have no incentives to learn to speak, even if he has the opportunity to hear others speak.

A child acquires speech not through simple imitation of sounds, but through a dialogue with human partners. The first words are expressions of need, articulations of wants, summonings of loved persons and objects through magical invocation of the name. Through words the child unites himself with his human partners. In the absence of human partners a child may learn to imitate sounds or parrot speech patterns, but he will not acquire a meaningful language. This has been clinically demonstrated in the tragic cases of infants and young children who have

never known human ties. No amount of instruction in speech will teach these children—even at the age of four or five or older—to use words to communicate needs or designate objects. There is only one measure that has been found effective in bringing about the development of meaningful speech in these children—the provision of a substitute mother, or sometimes a psychotherapist, to whom the child can attach himself and with whom he can form a human partnership.

The second point that should be made about early speech development is that it is unsystematic and cannot be reduced to formal teaching procedures. The child acquires a vocabulary through discovery and repetitions in contexts; in other words, learning is associative and not logical. Here the clinical demonstration may be seen in dream language and other examples of the primary process of thinking. It is only later in the development of the child that language acquires some degree of independence from need and from dialogue and can be employed for the expression of abstract ideas and for the ordering of thought.

The learning process in reading affords some close parallels to this beginning phase of speech development. Once again we have the discovery of words through a human partner, in this case the teacher. Once again words are initially invested with meaning through need and through pleasure: the mastery of even a few words gives the beginning reader a sense of exaltation, as if he magically possessed the thing through naming it, just as he once magically summoned a loved person by naming her. And the lure that was provided in early speech development, the discovery of a world of objects and their associations, has its equivalent in early reading in the lure of the story and world of the imagination. The acquisition of new words in reading follows the genetic sequence of speech development. Meaning is acquired in context, and the vocabulary expands through associative paths, unselfconsciously, without logical progression, independent of order in instruction. The eye is trained through the exercise of reading. No instructional device has matched the story and reading in quantity for incentive, pleasure, and painless mastery of the symbol system.

THE FAILURE of our present methods of reading and language instruction derives essentially from a failure in understanding the psychology of language. The teaching machines that loom in the future are only the absurd extensions of a pedagogy that has lost the connections between language and a human center and is urged on by a lunatic science to the last frontier. The child who learns to read words in a crowded classroom with an indifferent teacher and her mechanical aids has been deprived of the vital human connections that are indispensable for

learning to read and pleasure in reading. Long before the teaching machines came into vogue we created mechanical readers through mechanical teaching.

The child who must spend six years or more under our present teaching methods in order to achieve a reading capacity of 2,500 words will lose all pleasure in reading, and even the most arduous wooing may not bring him back to the state of readiness of a six-year-old. With more perseverance than an elementary-school student, I would not spend six years in studying a foreign language for this result. Mechanical mastery of reading must be achieved in ways that give increments of pleasure, and pleasure in mastery itself, or all motive will be destroyed. Those methods of reading instruction that give early mastery of mechanics and make way for the lure of the story at the earliest possible stage have the greatest potential for creating readers.

The "graded vocabulary" of our current texts is another affront to the learning of language. I was much entertained by the word lists compiled by Sylvia Ashton-Warner in her teaching of Maori children.* These children, who correspond to a group that we call "the culturally deprived," could not be lured into the standard primers (from the description of the texts, a New Zealand or British version of *Dick and Jane*). It occurred to Miss Ashton-Warner that the words of these texts were without value or meaning to the children and she began to experiment with a method in which the children provided their own word lists to the teacher. These words were written down on cards and given to the child to take home for study. The cards, greasy and mangled in the children's hands, became treasured possessions. And the children learned their words quickly.

One child's list included the following words: ghost, jet, jeep, skellington [skeleton], bike, aeroplane, sausage, porridge, egg, car, beer, jersey, kiss. Another child had these: peanut, cake, ghost, bed, kiss, socks. A third had: beer, pudding, bus, darling, kiss, ghost. Not at all, of course, like the words in a graded vocabulary. As a writer and a connoisseur of word values, Miss Ashton-Warner went unerringly to the source of the reading difficulty. She also had a natural understanding of word magic and translated this into a teaching method. Notice the repetition in the private lists of "ghost," for example, and "kiss"—the first a fear word and the second a love word. To be able to read "ghost" and write "ghost" is conjury for the child (and not only the Maori child). When you name the ghost you have him in your power. You can call him up and put him down through the magic act of reading. When you name "kiss" and read "kiss" you are united with a loved person, and you unlock a whole glossary of asso-

* *Teacher*, Simon & Schuster, 224, pp., \$5.00.

ciated words, and with them experiences and states of feeling in which pleasure, comfort, and protection can be magically revived. The reading vocabulary of these Maori children expanded according to no laws of logic or "form perception"; each new word unlocked associated groups of words, which is in itself an interesting demonstration of the repetition of beginning speech patterns in early reading.

Miss Ashton-Warner apparently had good results in engaging her "unteachable" children in reading because she understood words and word magic in a profound psychological sense. And if the method still popularly employed in our schools has been a failure, it is because the method does violence to the natural evolution of language.

The long years spent by our children in mastery of the mechanics of reading rob them of pleasure and discoveries in literature, but also rob them of the possibility of addiction, which is one of the characteristics of the good reader. The addiction to reading is acquired at an early age—usually, I believe, under eight or nine. The addict reveals himself through an insatiable appetite, an almost compulsive need to take in printed matter (even the legend on a can label or soap wrapper rivets the eye and must register its message). The book addict suffers certain types of disturbance when the supply is low or when he is cut off from the source of it. This is not pathological: the addict may be a healthy adult or child in all respects.

THE CRITICAL period for becoming addicted is early childhood, the time when urges are felt as irresistible and objects that gratify the urge are also experienced as irresistible. The educator who wishes to capitalize on the addictability of the child at this age must insure early and repeated gratifications from stories told

and stories read. It goes without saying that the urge is indiscriminate and that repeated gratifications from television or comic books can also result in a durable love affair. But if the educator's aim is to create readers, he must understand addiction and the forms of literary gratification that insure it in early childhood. Instruction that gives imperfect mastery of mechanics even at the age of twelve and later, has not only missed the critical period but has built up an aversion to reading which will resist the wooing of the most ardent teacher.

The educator who understands the meaning of language learning will know that it is human-centered from the start and that when it is deprived of its human connections it loses its own vital substances. It refuses to be automatized. For all the early years of education it requires a human partner, as if its origins in a human partnership had imprinted this condition. In reading, in language study, the teacher must become the human partner. If there is any part of this curriculum in which a machine can do as well as a good teacher, it has not yet been demonstrated. If we have tolerated the idea at all, it must be that it sometimes happens that a mechanical teacher will not do much better than a mechanical device. But why settle for either?

If the early teaching of reading and language is human-centered, and if addiction has done its work, there will come a time in childhood when pleasure in reading and in language achieve a certain degree of independence from the human partners who had served as teachers. The dialogue that had originated between the child and his family and the child and his teachers is no longer the indispensable component in learning and in pleasure. The book itself has taken over as a partner and is invested with some of the qualities of a human relationship. In this way literature becomes an extended dialogue.

"WHAT WAS THE MATTER WITH HENRY ADAMS?"

LIKE A half-buried former civilization—famous, extensive, and perplexing—the Adams family is being uncovered for us. The evolution from generation to generation is made clearer, and the factors that link each. John begat John Quincy who begat Charles Francis who begat Henry. The papers of the first three are coming out in handsome amplitude. "Think of your forefathers! Think of your posterity!" was John Quincy Adams's injunction. They force us to do so—to involve ourselves in their central yet idiosyncratic chronicle. They meet us halfway, for all Adamses had an eye to posterity.

Henry of the fourth generation has especially engrossed us, because he is the most interesting and tantalizing of the lot. There have been half a dozen books about him in the last decade or so, including the very good ones by William H. Jordy and J. C. Levenson. Max Baym has discussed his French interests, Henry Wasser his scientific notions. Edward N. Saveth has examined yet other aspects. But the most complete record is the trilogy by Ernest Samuels, a solid and admirable achievement which tells us as much about Henry Adams's inner and outer life as we are ever likely to learn.* Samuels is sensible, pertinacious, sympathetic but not idolatrous, and modestly speculative. The picture differs a good deal, though perhaps not fundamentally, from the one disclosed in *The Education of Henry Adams*—that curious work which is both less and more than an autobiography. Here is the complete story of an incomplete man. Or is that a fair comment? Which of us is not incomplete? Whatever the answer, Henry remains a figure to tease the imagination. As Lionel Trilling has said, we cannot react consistently to Adams. "Sometimes he is irresistible. . . . Sometimes he is hateful. . . . It often occurs to us to believe that his is the finest American intelligence we can possibly know, while again it sometimes seems that his mind is so special, and so refined in specialness, as to be beside any possible point."

The hateful or at least unlikable sides of Henry Adams are not concealed by Professor Samuels.

We are reminded that the English diplomatist Cecil Spring Rice, who was later to become his devoted friend, found him "cynical" and "vindictive." Another English acquaintance, Lord Morley, irked by the tone of *The Education*, said, "If Adams had ever looked at himself naked in a glass, he would have rated other men a little more gently." Adams irritated a generation of American Presidents, from Rutherford B. Hayes to his erstwhile friend, Theodore Roosevelt. Other public men were rubbed raw by his combination of arrogance and humility. A typical reaction was that of Justice Holmes, in the course of a conversation with Owen Wister:

Holmes: "If the country had put him on a pedestal, I think Henry Adams with his gifts could have rendered distinguished service."

Wister: "What was the matter with Henry Adams?"

Holmes: "He wanted it handed to him on a silver platter."

Not only Henry but the whole family, past and present, tended to leave this impression. From John Adams onward they were regarded as stiff, perverse, moody, sharp-tongued. They showed the same disposition toward one another. Spring Rice noted that "They are all clever, but they all make a sort of profession of eccentricity. . . . Two of them were arguing. One said, 'It seems to me that I am the only one of the family who inherits anything of our grandfather's manners.' 'But you dissipated your inheritance young,' answered the other. . . ." They were well aware of and almost boasted of their unlikableness, as if they thought it an essential corollary of being honest. Thus Henry's elder brother, Charles Francis Adams, Jr., served in the Civil War with the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry. In January 1864 his company, under his influence, was the only one in the regiment to re-enlist at the expiration of the first agreement. Charles wrote to his father:

To be egotistical, I think I see the old family traits cropping out in myself. These men don't

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* *The Young Henry Adams* (1948); *Henry Adams: The Middle Years* (1958); *Henry Adams: The Major Phase* (1964), by Ernest Samuels, Harvard University Press, \$5.50, \$7.50, \$10.00, respectively.

care for me personally. They think me cold, reserved and formal. They feel no affection for me, but . . . they have faith in my power of accomplishing results and in my integrity. . . .

The consequences within the family were sometimes bizarre. Its members had moments of intimacy, especially when they rallied together to defend the Adams reputation against strangers. Otherwise they made few concessions. Charles Francis Adams Jr., in a stratagem concealed from his brother, wrote a long unsigned review of Henry's biography of Albert Gallatin for the *Nation*. He called the book "clumsy," and "little short of . . . an outrage" for anyone who sought a true insight into Gallatin. Henry never discovered who had attacked him. His brother's motives were no doubt high-minded, at any rate on the surface. But obscure jealousies were at work. Who was to carry on the family's great tradition? Neither Charles nor the other elder brother John exactly sought the office. Nor did Henry or his younger brother Brooks Adams. But none was quite content to let the others have the limelight. "My father and brothers," Henry had acknowledged, "block my path fatally, for all three stand before me in order of promotion." The erratic Brooks, to his understandable chagrin, was once defeated by two votes in an attempt to secure election to the Massachusetts legislature. They were the votes of two of his uncles. Integrity, one might think, could be overdone. Charles, Henry, and Brooks all wrote history, and on occasion were of considerable help to one another. Yet they got on one another's nerves. Henry deliberately absented himself from Brooks's wedding. True, his own wife had committed suicide in 1885, and thereafter he could not endure reminders of matrimony. But a hostile observer could wonder at the circumstances of Henry's childless marriage, and could point out that Henry's impatience with Brooks was more widely based. Perhaps the impatience was justified. Like Henry, but with an extra quality of vehemence, Brooks wanted to provoke people as much as he wanted to instruct them. In his writings he preached calamity with increasing shrillness. Even at the stage in his life when he believed in reform, Brooks's sympathies were confined to his own class. In later life he became rabid—detecting conspiracies, dreaming of government by the strong. "Brooks is too brutal, too blatant, too emphatic . . . to please any large number of people," said Henry.

He himself was of a more timid disposition. Yet the brothers had a good deal in common. Each was at heart conservative, and in a sense class-ridden. Henry had gone to Harvard, studied in Europe, served as his father's secretary in London from 1861 to 1868 while C. F. Adams, Sr. was minister to Britain. He then lived in Washington; taught history for some years at Harvard; and came back to Washington to lead the life of a gentleman-scholar. Never in this stretch of time,

or subsequently, did he have close contact with commonplace people. Though he fretted now and then at his London situation, he never came back to enlist in the Union army—an experience that certainly left its mark on Charles Francis, Jr. The spectacle of poverty seems not to have moved him. The only physical suffering that appears to have made a deep impression was, typically enough, confined to the family: the death of his sister from lockjaw. H. S. Commager has drawn the contrast between Henry and Jane Addams. She devoted herself to the wretched multitudes in the Chicago slums. Henry nursed his investments and took long trips abroad. Her autobiography, *Twenty Years at Hull-House*, is a personal yet selfless document. *The Education of Henry Adams*, though impersonal and generalized, is astoundingly self-centered.

LIKE BROOKS, Henry passed through a phase of reformism, though he finally retired from the contest and began to express a withering contempt for the reform mentality, with its faith in democratic aspiration and its trust in ballot-box panaceas. Even in the Adamses' Washington heyday, during the late 1870's and early 1880's, we discover from Samuels that Henry and his wife shrank from the political hurlyburly. They lived close by the White House, they knew political leaders, and they relished political gossip. But their operations were confined to a select circle, based on an almost censoriously prim standard of selection. They condescended to President and Mrs. Hayes, and shuddered at senators like Blaine and Conkling. They snubbed visiting stage-performers—Sarah Bernhardt, Adelina Patti, Lily Langtry—whose morals they suspected. Their friend Henry James found the Adams sociopolitical code not altogether to his taste, if we may judge from the notes for his short story "Pandora." The character in this story presumably modeled on Adams is named "Bonnycastle." James makes Bonnycastle say, in discussing a dinner-party: "Hang it, there's only a month left; let us be vulgar and have some fun—let us invite the President." Bonnycastle, he acutely remarks, "was not in politics, though politics were much in him."

Henry Adams at one stage certainly hankered after some sort of public career. But in the maneuvers between—so to speak—the regulars and the volunteers, Henry and his amateur friends are easy targets for ridicule. Few were willing to soil their hands, few seemed to grasp what had happened to the old America for which they felt so proprietary an emotion. Disdainful of both major parties, the Adamses and their political intimates switched allegiances, and developed temporary enthusiasms for temporary third-party movements. They wrote articles denouncing corruption and stupidity, and ostracized political leaders at social gatherings; and were then piqued

to be ignored in turn, or insulted, as Henry thought himself, by the offer of a diplomatic post not in a European capital but—of all places—in Guatemala City. They recommended civil-service reform and a few other nostrums which were of only peripheral importance. They appealed to a “people” in whom they had no great confidence, and to men of cultivated minds—by which they meant themselves.

They vented their discouragement or their confused expectations in political novels like Henry Adams’s (anonymous) *Democracy* (1880) and Francis Marion Crawford’s *An American Politician* (1884). Their inadequacy is made abundantly, if unwittingly, clear in Crawford’s book. His hero is a Massachusetts gentleman-reformer: a figure much like Henry’s other elder brother, John, who ran unsuccessfully for the Massachusetts governorship. Like John, Crawford’s hero is a Democrat. But his chief argument is that party politics are the ruination of the United States. Where then does salvation lie? Crawford resorts to wishful fantasy. America’s destinies are safeguarded by a mysterious triumvirate, referred to only as “X,” “Y” and “Z,” members of

a small community of men which had existed from the earliest days of American independence. . . . It had frequently occurred that all three members of the council simultaneously held seats in the senate. . . . More than one President since Washington had sat at one time or another in the triumvirate; secretaries of state, orators, lawyers, financiers and philanthropists had given the best years of their lives to the duties of the council. . . .

Crawford assures us that these men had more than once “turned the scale of the country’s future.” But his is a thin dream to set beside the commanding reality of control as wielded by, say, the George Washington Plunkitt of Tammany Hall who “seen his opportunities and he took ‘em.”

ADAMS’S OWN NOVEL is less naïve. Yet it is no more useful as a guide to action. As Irving Howe has pointed out (*Politics and the Novel*), Adams affects to despise the behavior of Senator Ratcliffe, the character in *Democracy* who embodies corrupt ambition. But Ratcliffe is a far stronger figure than his disparagers. His sentiments are debated but not refuted; there is no genuine collision of ideas, and the author’s response to politics seems, in Howe’s words, “that of an esthete rather than a moralist.” Indeed, in *Democracy* and in his second novel, *Esther* (1884), as well as in the subsequent worship of femininity that led him to write *Mont St. Michel and Chartres* (1904, privately printed), one almost feels that Adams has chosen to be a woman. Women symbolize his own, secondary role. His heroines are ambitious in a fashion. Mrs. Lee in *Democracy*, comes to Washington “to measure . . . the capacity of the motive power.” There was, we

are told, “a very general impression . . . that Mrs. Lee would like nothing better than to be in the White House.” Again: “What she wanted was Power.” The same significant word is used of the heroine of *Esther*, with an equally significant qualification. Esther Dudley has “an instinct for power,” though “not the love of responsibility.”

In his fiction Henry Adams chose to examine the world through women’s eyes because they, like him, existed in a kind of graceful purdah. They may be brilliant, they may yearn for power, but they are compelled to proceed by indirection. Though they may be privy to great events, women participate merely as spectators, critics, hint-droppers—never as creators, instigators, prime movers. In crisis the sole gesture open to them is flight. Mrs. Lee runs off to Europe, Esther to Canada; Henry, too, was an incessant traveler. The only means of achieving power for such women is to be wooed by, married by it. The only free decision left to them is whether to accept or not. Both of Adams’s heroines decline the proposal. We recall Justice Holmes’s caustic version of the plight of Henry Adams: *He wanted it handed to him on a silver platter*—as if “it” were an invitation to a waltz.

Within their limited realm women are permitted to be social arbiters. The dislike of Jews, so marked in Henry’s later years, might be interpreted in these terms. Good society, American or European, had no properly defined place for the Jew. If Jews were more a symptom than a chief cause of the world’s decline, as Henry probably conceded, he was nevertheless ready to agree with Brooks Adams that the Jew was a sinister, conspiratorial figure. The wicked bankers plotted together with an effectiveness that the gentlemanly Francis Marion Crawford would have liked to attribute to his virtuous but alas imaginary triumvirate. What was a Jew like Dreyfus doing as a French army officer? How could his purpose *not* be nefarious? Henry Adams was convinced that Dreyfus was guilty of espionage. He resisted the proof of Dreyfus’s innocence, and maintained that the military were correct in closing their ranks against the clamorous Dreyfusards. Honor was at stake—the honor of the fatherland; and for a man descended from two Presidents the word “fatherland” had an almost literal application.

The intellectual systems of Henry Adams are equally open to question. The charge against him is vigorously put in Yvor Winters’s *Anatomy of Nonsense*. According to Winters, Adams was the unlucky inheritor of a debased New England Calvinism. The Calvinist mind was an “allegorical machine.” Even the most minor incident embodied some portentous significance. By the early 19th century, this attitude had broadened and weakened into the blank, generalizing tone of Unitarianism or—in the absence of easy religious belief—taken the form of “a kind of willed confusion and religious horror, best represented in literature”

(says Winters) "by Melville's *Pierre* and *The Confidence Man* and by the later work of Henry Adams."

Even as a young man Henry strove to find a pattern in the universe, yet told himself there probably was none. He was driven "to read every event with . . . allegorical precision; and since every event was isolated and impenetrable he read in each new event the meaning that the universe was meaningless." He became a seeker convinced he would find nothing, a connoisseur of bafflement and frustration. As his early ambitions for personal success dwindled, so for him mankind as a whole dwindled to pygmy scale and then to infinitesimal consequence in the scheme of things. He plunged into geology, into physics and mathematics, but less for enlightenment than in order to find fresh examples to illustrate his thesis that the universe was a weary chaos.

Formulas, dates, numbers fascinated him. He deployed them with a joking dogmatism, half frivolous, half anguished, to reinforce his contention that the only operative laws were laws of degradation or of nightmare acceleration. He fashioned numerological metaphors of the abyss: the squares that escape by giant leaps toward infinity; their opposites, the inverse squares that shrink within themselves, in pursuit of nothingness; the asymptotes that skirt the edge of non-existence. These formulas of failure can be seen as signs of an inordinate egotism. It was perhaps egotism of a solipsistic variety, in somehow equating the fate of one Adams with that of the cosmos. Louis XIV thought that disaster would overtake mankind when he was dead ("*Après moi le déluge*"): to judge from the calculations of the aging Henry Adams, the world would come to an end at about the same moment that he did. Henry knew how crushing was the sense of failure in his ancestors. John Quincy Adams, rejected by the electorate in 1828 after one unhappy term as President, remembered a song from Grétry's opera *Richard Coeur-de-Lion* which he had heard sung thirty years before, and felt its bitter meaning for himself: "*O Richard, o mon roi, l'univers t'abandonne.*" His grandson Henry knew the anecdote, and seemed bent on turning the tables. If the universe had abandoned his grandfather, he himself could decide to abandon the universe.

In short, Henry Adams might be viewed as an extreme example of the late 19th-century American patriciate, endowed with the characteristic minor virtues of such a class (refinement, wit, cosmopolitanism, personal honesty), and the characteristic minor vices (snobbery, malice, diffidence, self-pity).

But then, to come back to Lionel Trilling's response, a quite different and much more attractive interpretation may be put on the man and his writings.

It is not easy to put the two views together so that the more favorable carries due weight. A

striking instance is the long essay by Yvor Winters, already cited, in which a devastating critique of Adams's intellectual equipment is suddenly followed by lavish praise of the nine-volume *History*. Winters describes this as possibly "the greatest historical work in English, with the probable exception of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*." His analysis of the *History* is plausible, but in context we see that Winters has had to wrestle with his equivocal response to Henry Adams.

The easiest way out is to echo Winters's praise, to total up the sum of Adams's other writings, and to conclude that he is after all a major American author. The mere bulk is impressive; so is the range, from medieval to modern times, from poetry and fiction to rigorous scholarship. Major authors can be forgiven almost anything. What then if Henry Adams *was* a querulous snob? But this will not quite do. For one thing, even after Samuels's exhaustive inquiry, some aspects of Adams's authorship remain a little puzzling. For another, we ought to ask ourselves whether Adams and other members of the American patriciate did not in their era have a *right* to feel sorry for themselves.

LET US CONSIDER his writings. We may for the moment put aside the private correspondence, not published in his lifetime. The problem is why, if Adams is now deemed so excellent an historian, his qualities were not fully appreciated by contemporaries. Samuels offers some partial answers, and others suggest themselves. Thus, the volumes of the *History* were published at intervals; reviewers, dealing with isolated portions, failed to perceive the grand design—the symmetry of the work, the large generalizations on national character and on the evolution of democracies. Again, Adams did nothing to commend himself to reviewers. The cluster of friends who read preliminary proofs were disqualified from reviewing the finished product. He refrained from sweetening other potential critics by distributing complimentary copies, or praising *their* works. Possibly a few of the critics resented Adams for being who he was. The academics among them could well have been irritated by a man who refused the offer of honorary degrees (from Harvard and Yale), and who avoided the meetings of the American Historical Association—including the one at which he was supposed to deliver the presidential address. Nor was this office of president as flattering a recognition as might appear. In that day it went to a curious assortment of professors, popularizers, and public men.

Adams was right in thinking that there was no large market for serious historical scholarship. Perhaps he hoped for too much, and attempted to satisfy incompatible desires within his own nature. Gibbon and Macaulay were much on his mind: he wanted to compose *literary* masterpieces.

He was also determined to be scientific in the narrow sense of being punctilious. Hence the burrowing in sources, the long direct quotations which he (urged on by his brother Charles) took to be the hallmark of true history. And he dreamed of being scientific in some far larger way. The quest was lifelong. At the age of twenty-five, in a letter to Charles, Henry sketched his current philosophical interests. He went on to speculate that "in every progression, somehow or other, the nations move by the same process *which has never been explained* but is evident in the ocean and the air."* Thirty years later, in the essay on "The Tendency of History," Adams shows how much the search for this explanation has occupied him. He speaks of the tantalizing awareness among historians of standing

on the brink of a great generalization that would reduce all history under a law as clear as the laws which govern the material world. . . . No teacher with a spark of imagination or with an idea of scientific method can have helped dreaming of the immortality that would be achieved by the man who should successfully apply Darwin's method to the facts of human history.

The endeavor was heroic, and a factor to be reckoned with in the final assessment of Henry Adams. However he might camouflage or deride his ambitions, this was a considerable one. But the results are disappointing. Of course he was a gifted historian. Still, he did not altogether find the formulas, literary or methodological, he was looking for. The style of the *History*, and of the previous biographies of Gallatin and Randolph, is as interesting as Winters says. It is, though, too lapidary in places (too close to Gibbon?), and verges on melodrama in others (an overdose of Macaulay?). The scientific theorizing sounds more tentative than Adams probably meant it to be. The rival claims of narrative and exposition, of the exceptional individual and the average mass, are not firmly resolved. We know how perfect a style—supple, wry, allusive, entirely personal—Adams evolved in his correspondence. Perhaps we read his histories with this in mind. Reviewers at the time had no such advantage. They may have been slightly repelled by the alternations of assertion and questioning, of national pride and headshaking pessimism; by the Gibbonian, distanced irony; and by the sheer tedium of complicated diplomatic exchanges, no matter how lucidly rendered. Adams was far more intelligent than his successor in the presidency of the American Historical Association, Senator Hoar of Massachusetts. Hoar's presidential address was a humorless protest at the denigration of American history by unspecified cynics. Presumably Henry Adams was one of the offenders at whom Hoar aimed his rather clumsy darts. But one can see

what Hoar was getting at. There was something unspoken, pontifical, rebarbative, caustic in the public style of Adams's middle years.

HAVING SAID this, we must immediately stress that he does deserve to be taken seriously, as scholar and as stylist. He did aim very high. If he could not be a universal man, he did nevertheless deal in universals. Historians before his time often spoke of "universal" history. What it might amount to none could precisely explain. Even so, the idea persisted as a grand if indistinct challenge. Adams attempted to combine this earlier search for the philosopher's stone with the newer passion for "scientific" history, so as to arrive at universal scientific history. The product would have to be on the scale of Marx or Comte, Darwin or Spencer, but still more intellectually exact than these. Adams could not have labored so long and hard if he had not in his inmost being clung to the vision of winning immortality as one of the great system-builders of his time. It was odd that he went about the task in such a way as to be regarded as temperamentally frivolous and negative. Though he traveled comfortably and often, and could be accused of trying to run away from himself, he never journeyed out of mere boredom. His travels had a purpose, whether he was in Tahiti or Japan, the American West or the cathedral towns of Normandy. The truest picture of Henry Adams is not of a holiday-maker in a panama hat, or of a spoiled old salon-wit, but of a man alone at a table stacked with books and transcripts, absorbed in thought, and writing firmly and fluently.

Another way to see him is as a craftsman of letters. His concern with good writing far transcended dandyism. He could not bear slovenly or superfluous phrases. When he was editor of the *North American Review* he showed no mercy to contributors' manuscripts, however eminent the author. He took enormous trouble over the style and content of some of Brooks's work. Henry was equally severe on his own writing. He wrote better in 1880 than in 1870, better in 1890 than in 1880, and so on to the end of his days. The perverse reluctance to let certain works appear under his own name, or appear at all, was in part the hesitation of a perfectionist. When early essays were reprinted he revised them with the utmost care. Another part of his hesitation came from uncertainty as to who constituted his audience, and how they should therefore be addressed. The compromise of his later days, when he devised *Mont St. Michel* and the *Education* as private entertainments, was in literary terms brilliantly right. Here, as in his private correspondence, he hit upon just the appropriate form in which to disport the *persona* of one whom friends dubbed the Angelic Porcupine. By his standards it was a minuscule achievement; yet it has been the principal guarantor of immortality for Henry Adams.

* *Italics mine.*

THERE REMAINS the final question of the quality of the American patriciate. Fastidiousness, petulance, estrangement, snobbishness, anti-Semitism: these are certainly evident in Henry and his friends, and hard to defend without falling into the same restricted mode of thought. We can at least emphasize that Henry suffered more than his friends from the fact of being an Adams, and that he did his best to escape this peculiar circumstance. Could he be blamed for feeling that the United States was *his* country, and that it had gone on the wrong track? He came to despair of democracy, yet he never believed that other nations were better. They were even worse, and for Adams to assert this was a demonstration of patriotism. As a young man, and into middle age, he continued to think he was a citizen of a great country. If his optimism gradually evaporated, so did that of scores of his contemporaries—by no means all of them old-stock American gentry. His

misanthropy was no greater, for example, than that of Mark Twain, and more firmly based on knowledge and insight. The America of the Gilded Age was no edifying spectacle for an honest and sensitive man. We may laugh at the feeble expedients of gentlemen-reformers; but what else could they have done? The choice lay between ineffective protest, and capitulation to the major political and commercial interests. Neither was satisfactory. Those who took the other road than Henry's lost as much as they gained. Power entailed not only responsibility, but complicity in dubious enterprises. Henry Adams, to reiterate, did his best. His best was not good enough. Nor was anyone else's, in the rarefied atmosphere of the Adams dynasty. We may say of him, as John Dos Passos has said of Thorstein Veblen, that he never could get his tongue around the essential yes. For this, in the last analysis, is Henry Adams not to be honored instead of scolded?

DAVID SCHOENBAUM

NAZI MURDERS & GERMAN POLITICS

IT TOOK ONLY two weeks for the Bundestag to cover the route from *mystique* to *politique*. On March 10, before jammed press galleries and a national radio audience, the house debated measures for the extension of the statute of limitations on Nazi murders in a first reading. On March 25, again before jammed press galleries, but without the radio public, it reached a tortuous compromise.

Rather than extending or even eliminating the statute, the house preferred to move it. The opening date of calculation of the twenty-year statute had hitherto been May 8, 1945, the date of Germany's surrender in World War II, and with it of Germany's loss of judicial sovereignty. It was now advanced to December 31, 1949, theoretically the date on which Germany resumed judicial sovereignty.

The practical result was not the ten-year or fourteen-year or indefinite extension under consideration as recently as a week before, but a four-year extension whose principal advantage seemed to be that it dissatisfied its opponents and supporters in equal measure. Fritz Erler, floor leader of the opposition Social Democrats (SPD), and one of the leading engineers of the compromise, said openly that half a solution—which this could be understood to be—was better than none. Chancellor Ludwig Erhard expressed his disappointment at the convention of his Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in Duesseldorf a week later. West Germany's lawyers, only too aware that German courts had in fact been allowed to prosecute certain Nazi crimes between May 8, 1945 and December 31, 1949, looked forward without enthusiasm to the first test cases.

The drama of March 10 and its anticlimactic finale of March 25 were followed over the week-end by the interlude of Minister of Justice Edward Bucher's resignation and a potential—but finally abortive—cabinet crisis. As Joachim Prinz arrived in the Federal Republic and shook his

head over the future of German democracy, and the Russians charged Bonn with a crypto-amnesty, the Bundestag returned to its daily agenda and to the last preparations for what will probably be West Germany's most hectic election campaign.

While at no point inevitable, the disappointing result was built into the circumstances from the start. But the circumstances, in turn, mirrored the complexities of political life in the Federal Republic as have few other issues in recent years.

Though already in progress in the press for some weeks before, the debate began for all practical purposes on November 11, 1964, when the cabinet announced its resolution to let the statute expire on May 8, 1965. The resolution was followed on November 22 by an appeal to foreign governments to make available to West German authorities any material in their possession that would support further indictments before the expiration date.

Two premises buttressed this resolution. The first was the general conviction that extension would be unconstitutional. The second was Bucher's belief that West Germany's legal apparatus would be capable of indicting all remaining suspects before May. Neither premise, it appeared in the course of events, was valid. But meanwhile the issue had become entangled in other problems—considerations of domestic politics, of foreign policy, of positive law, of historical conscience. Separable for the fewest and perhaps luckiest of deputies, these considerations were to jostle one another until the afternoon of March 25.

Both the limits and the possibilities of conscience could be seen in the representative figures of the three deputies who tended to dominate the discussion from beginning to end: Ernst Benda, Thomas Dehler, and Adolf Arndt.

Benda, the youngest, is a member of that indeterminate "younger generation" which has been ritually invoked by commentators, foreign and domestic, since the end of the war. Born in 1925, he was the son of a respectable bourgeois

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family, a member of Niemoeller's Confessional Church, and—in the sense of the Nuremberg laws—not fully “aryan.” “Prussian” is his own self-characterization. A Jewish grandfather, much decorated in World War I and subsequently an official of the War Ministry, lost his position in 1933 but was awarded the “privileged” status granted a tiny number of former war heroes. As such, in the full glory of his decorations, he publicly protested in 1938 against his exclusion from the plebiscitary ratification of the Austrian *Anschluss*.

It was with this archetypal patriotism that he sent his grandson on his way in 1943 when Benda was inducted into the navy. Ernst, his grandfather told him, was always to distinguish between Germans and Nazis. In the same year, the senior Benda was rounded up with Berlin's other “privileged Jews” for deportation. But they were released shortly afterward by virtue of the remarkable public protest of their non-Jewish wives and the resulting embarrassment of the Gestapo. A famous episode, it was recalled in the Bundestag debate on March 10, though by Arndt and not by Benda.

Benda himself returned from the war to study law—he also spent a year at the University of Wisconsin during his student career—and took up politics. Neither particularly typical nor particularly untypical of his generation, he established a successful law partnership, a Mediterranean summer home, and a reputation as a comer in Berlin's staunchly bourgeois, if ruggedly individualistic, CDU. In 1957 he was elected to the Bundestag.

It was recalled later, as Benda became something of a celebrity, that he was a man of considerable political courage. In his student days he had been thrown out of a political meeting for not standing up to sing *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*. During his first legislative term in Bonn, he had also taken on the then Minister of the Interior, Gerhard Schroeder, at a time when this was not yet a fashionable thing to do.

But nothing indicated in early November that it would be Benda, of 250-odd CDU deputies, who would take the initiative in reversing the government's decision, nor, in fact, that any initiative would come from this direction at all. Neither the question of *cui bono*, nor his family history, was a reliable guide. The first would more likely have led the way of discretion, the second to a dead end. Other family histories similar to Benda's could be found on both sides of the debate.

What remained was conscience. “I just thought something should be done,” Benda told interviewers in December. “We owe it to the world and to ourselves. This has nothing to do with war crimes. It has to do with murder, and it has to do with justice. We have the means to

deal with this problem constitutionally. It's time we used them.”

Neither granted nor actively denied the support of his party—which, however, agreed to drop discipline in the matter—Benda proceeded on his own. With fifty co-signatories, he presented a private member's bill in January to extend the statute of limitations on murder from twenty to thirty years. Until the end, this bill remained one pole of the discussion.

The other pole formed around Thomas Dehler. Dehler, now sixty-seven, has been all his life that rarest of German political phenomena, a Bavarian liberal. A member of the German Democratic party during the Weimar Republic, he defended the Republic until there was nothing left to defend. During the Nazi period he was arrested twice by the Gestapo, in part on account of his politics—between 1942 and 1944 he was close to Goerdeler's resistance group—in part on account of his “non-aryan” wife. After the war, he became co-founder of the Free Democratic Party (FDP), the Federal Republic's first Minister of Justice, and Vice President of the Bundestag.

A man more easily conceivable in the Frankfurt parliament of 1848 than in the Bundestag, a compulsive fighter for lost causes whose belief in the rule of law is as doctrinaire as it is unquestionable, Dehler now took his stand against extension of the statute of limitations. So did his party. Whatever the FDP's motives may have been, Dehler's own sincerity in opposing extension was beyond doubt.

EXTENSION, Dehler was convinced, was legally impermissible because it violated the constitution's article 103, paragraph 2, *nulla poena sine lege* (no penalty without law). The same principle applied to advancing the date of calculation. But Dehler's objections were not only legal. They were moral and political as well. Would he support extension if a constitutionally unobjectionable means could be found for doing so? This was a fundamental question, and his answer was no. It was not the murderers themselves who were ultimately guilty, Dehler believed, though he was prepared to see them prosecuted—according to law—until May 8, 1965. “It is easy to claim that they are beasts in human form,” he declared in the Bundestag on March 10. “But I can only recommend the study of Hannah Arendt, who followed the Eichmann trial with such diligence, who read 3600 pages of testimony and tells us that here and there—the thought is macabre—she laughed aloud about the stupidity, the simplicity of the man. Eichmann was a *Hanswurst*, a buffoon, a nobody.”

Who, then, was ultimately guilty? Those, Dehler maintained, who had created the murderers, those who had destroyed the Weimar Republic. This position, he might have conceded, led nowhere—except perhaps to the prosecution of

Bismarck, or Luther, or Arminius in the Teutoburg Forest. Dehler himself would have been happy to see it lead to prosecution of the Roman Catholic Church in which, like all Bavarian liberals, he finds the root of most, if not all, evil. But Dehler's position had, in any case, one relevant lesson for the future. This was that a new German democracy must never again deviate from the path of law. It was here that Dehler took his stand, and his party, with varying degrees of credibility, fell in behind him.

Between Dehler and Benda stood Adolf Arndt of the SPD. Arndt, too, is a lawyer, and the son of a law professor, a baptized Prussian Jew. He is, by all accounts, a militant Protestant, and evidently a man with a strong burden of guilt, something to which he testified in his Bundestag speech of March 10. "I did not go out on the street and shout as the Jews were carried away. I did not wear a yellow star and say: Take me too."

Arndt's starting point, only a few months before, was not this, however, but the same one as Dehler's, whose stubbornness he had matched and even exceeded in articles of great learning and sagacity. This phase apparently passed for him by the end of 1964, at which point, entangled in his own conscience, and under the influence of SPD colleagues, he came forward with the most radical measure proposed to date. If extension was morally necessary, as he now believed it was, if it was nonetheless unconstitutional, as he still suspected, the solution was a constitutional amendment dropping the statute of limitations on murder. The SPD agreed and adopted the amendment as its official policy (though there was little possibility that the votes could be found for ratification). In the end, Arndt, with the rest of the SPD, voted for the compromise measure.

For those endowed neither with the moral indignation of Benda, nor the doctrinaire righteousness of Dehler—nor the determination of a small minority that further prosecution be limited if not prevented altogether—Arndt's vacillation was typical. But while Arndt wrestled with his conscience alone, the majority of deputies wrestled with a variety of other factors.

This applied particularly to the FDP which wrapped itself in "the law" and refused to be moved. The party found its veritable personification in Bucher. Minister of Justice since the end of 1962, and the most effective one since his colleague Dehler left office in 1953, Bucher had done all in his limited official power to keep Nazi prosecutions going (he was the first Minister of Justice to send West German district attorneys to look at Polish archives). But he was prepared to turn the statute of limitations into an issue of principle with a threat to resign if the government—though not the Bundestag—reversed the position it had taken on his advice on November 11.

This was an ambiguous stand: if it really was a

matter of principle, the distinction between cabinet and Bundestag was gratuitous for the minister who would ultimately have to sign and execute the relevant legislation. But the ambiguity was effectively settled at the FDP convention in Frankfurt the week of the second debate. With the scarcely concealed prompting of his executive committee, Bucher now extended his resignation threat to the Bundestag as well. To the applause of delegates preparing to scrape the "national" barrel in the September elections, he immediately became something of a hero.

BUT SUCH unanimity of interest as that of this minority party whose "liberal" and "national" impulses for once coincided, could scarcely be found in the major parties, especially the SPD. If SPD hearts beat spontaneously for extension of the statute of limitations, SPD heads were only too conscious of the hazards of a unilateral initiative that might compromise its most favorable electoral outlook since 1949. This ambivalence could be seen in Willy Brandt's letter of January 24 to *Die Welt am Sonntag*, Germany's major Sunday paper with a circulation of 490,000. "We have the responsibility to take foreign opinion seriously," Brandt wrote. "This is in our own interest as well. But it remains to be seen which way we can and should go. To be sure, we must also make clear to our foreign friends that every legal system is different, and that the Federal Republic, of all countries, has an obligation to respect the law. Legal objections must be taken seriously. It would be a bad thing to choose a course that would later be declared unconstitutional."

The alternative to an SPD policy initiative, it appeared, was a tactical one. This had already been taken in December with the object of calling Bucher's bluff. By resolution of the house, Bucher was to be required to submit a review of prosecutions to date by March 1, 1965, with indication of whether all remaining suspects could, as he had maintained, be indicted by May 8. Since the government had chosen to stand on this particular ground, this was the right place to attack it, and there was little question of how the fight would come out. The activity of the CDU's Benda now worked to the advantage of the SPD, and the resolution was submitted jointly to the floor leaders of the major parties, Barzel (CDU) and Erler (SPD). With only the FDP, which denied the relevance of the resolution, opposing, the draft cleared the house by a large majority on December 9.

Meanwhile the fight went on in the CDU and its Bavarian affiliate, the Christian Social Union (CSU), where the factors impinging on decision elsewhere were reproduced in new variations. Conscience was represented by the Benda group which now stretched across the party's sociologi-

cal chasms, uniting Catholic and Protestant, North and South German, business and labor deputies in a rare alliance. The "national" position was in the hands of the rural Catholic CSU, prone on the basis of its fundamentalist anti-Communism to damn any measure likely to "foul the German nest." Electoral discretion was in the hands of Rainer Barzel, preoccupied with the unity not only of his party and its two disparate sections, CDU and CSU, but also with the reputation of his party's chancellor and the chancellor's government.

If votes were to be lost in September on the issue—votes the CDU could ill afford to lose in its fifth and hardest effort to win a popular mandate—they were bound to go to the FDP. Since, beyond this, the CSU was running in Germany's safest constituencies, a loss of CDU strength meant increased influence for the CSU in the common caucus.

Thus, extending the statute of limitations involved not only questions of conscience or electoral opportunism, but fundamental political considerations. To take a stand in favor of extension was to play into the hands both of the increasingly nationalist FDP, and—unless a compromise formula could be found that would appeal to the Catholic impulses of the CSU without offending its nationalist sensibilities—of the CSU. For the CDU to risk the loss of several thousand voters—no more, but enough in a tight election—was to face the alternatives of opposition in September or a new coalition with the FDP and a strengthened CSU. On the other hand, to take a stand against extension meant an affront to world opinion. It meant potential confirmation of Russian charges to those Eastern Europeans who, for the first time since the war, were prepared to listen to West German voices. And, as nobody could doubt for a moment, it meant a steady stream of artfully selected revelations from May 8 onward—both from the well-kept archives of East Berlin and from the files of West German publishers. "I can see the headline now," an embittered correspondent wrote in one of West Germany's leading dailies, "I Was a Guard in Auschwitz."

Erhard, equally apprehensive of his coalition partners and of his allies, expressed private dissatisfaction with his government's position. But he made no use of his constitutional prerogative of defining policy on his own initiative. Instead he maintained his public silence to the end. Put up or shut up, was Brandt's reaction to the chancellor's complaint at the end of March. Since Erhard had not been prepared to influence the decision, Brandt told the press, he had no right to be disappointed with it.

BUT EACH TIME a foreign voice was heard in Bonn, the government's position could be seen to shift. Nahum Goldmann, president of

the World Jewish Congress, visited Bonn in early December. "Should new material appear abroad, the Federal Government could find itself in an entirely new situation," its speaker, Karl Guenther von Hase, told the press a few days later. He was even seconded by Bucher. In February, several hundred demonstrators in New York presented a petition for extension to the German Consul General, and Simon Wiesenthal, director of the Jewish Documentation Center in Vienna, appeared in Bonn. The chancellor continued as before to favor extension of the statute, Hase (though not Erhard) repeated at a press conference a few days later.

Ironically, however, the decisive voice was to come not from New York or Tel Aviv or Moscow, but from Cairo. This was the voice of President Nasser inviting East Germany's Walter Ulbricht for a state visit to Egypt. The invitation was followed by the revelation of West German arms shipments to Israel. The inescapable unity of past and present was suddenly illuminated as seldom before in Germany's postwar history. In the midst of a full-scale crisis in its relations not only with the Arabs but with Israel, the government moved its position again. While the ultimate decision was reserved to the Bundestag, a cabinet statement declared: "The government will support the Bundestag in its effort to find a possibility that will guarantee, with the preservation of constitutionality, that justice is done."

"Anybody who can read knows what this means," Hase added in explanation of the oracle. "Statute to be extended," Munich's *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* announced the next day.

Bucher's report of March 1 provided the final push. While establishing that 80,000 defendants had been convicted for Nazi crimes since 1945 (6,100 by West German courts), and that charges were still pending before West German courts against 13,892 more, the report nonetheless confirmed what Erwin Schuele, director of the Ludwigsburg Investigating Agency, had already disclosed privately to the two major party caucuses. In the words of Bucher's report: "The possibility cannot be excluded that both new deeds and new suspects may become known after May 8, 1965."

It was on this basis that the Bundestag convened on March 10 to debate what was soberly titled on the agenda as "Eighth Revision of the Penal Code: First Reading." Sentiment for extension was now at its high point, and even members of the CSU expressed support for it in principle. So did the hitherto reluctant Max Guede, once the Federal Republic's Solicitor General until he left his post in exasperation with West Germany's antiquated system of political justice.

Guede, since 1961 a CDU deputy and chairman of the subcommittee on penal reform, now

introduced into the debate an element hitherto latent but never quite within the discussion. Like all lawyers who had had to deal practically with the problem of Nazi prosecution—this included Arndt, who was the only Social Democrat to applaud Guede's speech—Guede was perplexed with the inconsistency of the guidelines and precedents created by civil and military, allied, occupation, and Federal Republican courts since 1945.

"I am prepared to support a definitive solution," he told the house, "but only if we find a way to avoid having to deal with the entire mass of 14,000—or by that time 16,000 or 17,000—cases, a way to confine the extension to a narrow sector of those who were really responsible, in responsible ranks, those who, by God, deserve to be punished. But the farther this goes down the ranks, the more questionable is the actual responsibility, and the more questionable is the chance of conviction."

After seven hours of debate—deflected from its course only by the SPD deputy Jahn's over-eagerness to score points off the government and Barzel's embarrassingly obvious proclamation of man's (i.e., the voter's) right to political (i.e., Nazi) error—the Bundestag referred Benda's bill, a similar SPD bill, and Arndt's proposed amendment to the judiciary committee. SPD, CDU, and most of the CSU voted in favor, the FDP against. The SPD's Carlo Schmid, in the chair, while conceding rhetorically that it was not the function of the speaker to distribute grades, added that the debate had done honor to the house.

IF, AS THE German proverb says, "the devil lives in details," the devil now entered the proceedings. The Judiciary Committee—thirteen CDU/CSU, eleven SPD, three FDP—faced the task of turning the exaltation of March 10 into a bill capable of finding the widest possible majority. It was inclined, beyond this, to find some kind of solution to the problem that had perplexed Guede. Guede and Arndt went directly into a huddle about this, and the matter seems to have played a major role in committee discussions. What emerged was a provision for restricted prosecution.

A majority, unofficially reported at thirteen to two, voted in favor of this provision. But the vote took place while leading SPD members were in plenary session on the floor of the house. At their behest, and with the support of Benda and his followers, the committee came around to a compromise. The SPD's constitutional amendment was to remain in committee. Two bills were reported out—Benda's, extending the statute of limitations on crimes punishable with life imprisonment to thirty years, and Guede's, an idea picked up from former Chancellor Adenauer, advancing the date of calculation

from May 8, 1945, to December 31, 1949.

Restricted prosecution appeared as Paragraph 3 of Guede's bill. "We went to a lot of trouble with this," an SPD member said afterward. "In fact, I would have supported paragraph 3 myself, sentence for sentence as we worked out the draft. But I couldn't support it in this context." According to Guede's provision, charges were to be based only on directly incriminating evidence. Where the direct responsibility of the defendant was in question, the district attorney was to be allowed to apply to a court of the second instance for non-prosecution of charges. Should charges have been filed, he could apply for their withdrawal. Either on his own initiative or on application of the defendant, the district attorney could present his evidence to a court of the second instance for review of the defendant's responsibility. In case of appeal, the federal high court, the last instance, could intervene without reference to the prosecution and dismiss the case. At least theoretically, Guede's provision sufficed to prevent prosecution altogether.

Meanwhile, the wave of emotion of March 10 had passed its peak. Foreign demonstrations had ceased. West Germany's relations with Israel, to everybody's surprise, appeared on the way to normalization. The party lines, hitherto a minimal factor in the debate, were now reasserting themselves in the form of support for Guede's paragraph 3 on the right side of the house, and of determined resistance to it on the left.

With no indication of the number of noses that might be lined up behind either of the alternate bills, the situation was unclear to the point of total confusion. Among the theoretical possibilities were: passage of the Guede bill by a broad majority of CDU/CSU and SPD, extending the statute of limitations by four years; passage of the Benda bill by a small CDU/SPD majority, extending it by ten; passage of both, extending it by fourteen years; or passage of neither, extending it not at all. It was even conceivable that Guede's paragraph 3 could find a small parliamentary majority of FDP, CDU, and CSU, and be passed by itself with no extension attached. "One thing is certain," the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, an unequivocal supporter of the Benda bill, reported from Bonn on the evening of March 24. "In a pinch, the SPD will support Benda."

It was just this, however, that failed to happen. On the morning of March 25, after the session had already begun, a recess was called for party caucuses. Barzel reported to Erler that the chances of finding a majority for the Benda bill were slim, the chances of finding a majority for the Guede bill that would include the CSU, on the other hand, relatively good. The SPD, in no position to prove the contrary, agreed. As its own condition, it demanded that Guede's paragraph 3 be referred back to committee, and re-

submitted as a separate bill. To this, Barzel agreed.

A failure of parliamentary nerve was, at the same time, a triumph of parliamentary abc's. Both SPD and CDU were spared the embarrassment of a nationalist campaign, at least by the CSU, either now or in September. The SPD was spared the danger of isolation on an unpopular issue. The Federal Republic—as both sides agreed—was spared the humiliation of parliamentary inaction. The principal loser was Benda, still claiming his fifty votes, but no longer disposed to a show-down without SPD support. Benda withdrew his bill. The deputies returned to the floor of the house and did as they were told.

In due course, Guede's paragraph 3 returned to committee where at least one SPD member was reasonably sure that it would die. "Look at it this way," he said. "Wilhelmi, the chairman of the committee, is against it. He'll be in no hurry to report it back out. He and Benda plus eleven Social Democrats form a practical majority when it comes to reconsidering it. Even Guede is aware of its weaknesses, and now that extension itself is taken care of, the thing can no longer be used

as a bargaining point by either side. Even if it does come out again, its implications are so far-reaching that it will have to be rewritten broadly enough for us to support it. Potentially it affects our foreign image just as much as the extension bill itself, and it needs the same kind of parliamentary majority."

In its amended form, Guede's bill was defended by the CSU's Richard Jaeger, one of the most conservative men in the house, and by Erler. "Even if those of us who would have preferred another solution are disappointed that the best solution was not chosen," Erler told the FDP, "we are not prepared to let our determination be compromised at this point by those who are not interested in a solution at all."

In a roll call vote, the compromise bill now passed, 361 to 96, with four abstentions. The Berlin deputies voted en bloc with the majority. Three FDP deputies voted with them, including Dr. Walter Rieger of Cologne, who had held a minor judiciary post between 1937 and 1940 and had subsequently been an army staff officer. One SPD deputy, Hannsheinz Bauer of Wuerzburg, exasperated with the compromise, abstained in protest.

DEIRDRE LEVINSON

THE HOMECOMING OF JOEL BIALYSTOCK

A Story

THE ARISTOTELIAN prescription which attended Joel Bialystock in his homecoming, the accompaniment, namely, by terror of pity and love, may be accountable finally less to his family than to his own idiosyncrasy. Abnormal fear of pain contains its dialectic in itself; but Joel was burdened by more than this. He was mesmerized by suffering, and eternally condemned to seek out and enter compulsively the realms most sure to give rise to his own. For persons so afflicted a specific antidote is a paramount necessity. Selective self-entombment was Joel's traditional defense policy, breached unwittingly, capriciously, but with invariable accuracy exclusively by his family. Therefore, as he announced himself at his parental home, he was terrified.

"Noah," Joel's mother screamed from the hall as soon as she saw her son's eyes through the letter-box, "it's Joel." She opened the door saying, "You've been hitchhiking through the jungle, haven't you? I found out there aren't any trains in Africa. You think I'm a fool."

Joel said, "I came by go-cart, Ma." He didn't embrace her, nor she him. His father met him in the hall with his noisy wordless greeting, invading Joel instantly with an oppression so familiar that deaf and blind he would have known he was home and that his father was there, endowing with gratuitous munificence the air around him with his exile and his loss. He said only, "How he looks!" then, "Maurice will be home in a minute" in chorus with Joel's mother's "You look terrible! Marianne will be home tomorrow," proceeding at once solo to an account of Joel's sister, Marianne, and Marianne's spouselessness: "Six proposals and she won't look at one of them."

Joel interrupted, "How's Maurice at school?"

"He's all right," his mother went to turn the frying fish, "the boys hit him, but he'll get over it."

"Why doesn't he hit them back?" But she was out of earshot. With an effort, because their only business with one another resided in an interminable silence, Joel addressed his father directly. "Why do they hit him, Dad?"

His father's smile was compounded of shyness, pity, and transparently affected contempt for his lastborn. "The boys don't think much of him. He's . . .," he searched his spare, formal English vocabulary, "he's *dopey*."

But Maurice's dopiness is organic: it's in his eyes and mouth and legs. He wears long pants now. When he wore short pants his legs could tell you everything. "How's his Hebrew?"

"Not so marvelous," his father answered modestly. "And how was Africa?" He assumed the genial man-of-the-world voice he reserved for the labored conversation by which he sought to please his alien son.

"Not so marvelous."

"Israel seems to be making many friends there. It's political, of course." He prided himself on his impartiality in discussing world affairs.

There was a bang at the door. He flew to answer it. Joel heard whispering from the hall and Maurice's incredulous voice: "He isn't!" When he entered the living-room and saw Joel he turned scarlet, said, "Hello, Joel, hello, Joel," compressing his lips with shyness and pleasure, and retreating, shoulder-blades first, toward the wall. "Fetch the chess-board," Joel said.

He moved first. "I told you you'd get your eleven-plus," he said through the din of the everlasting soliloquies in that house from the radio in the living-room and the stove in the kitchen. "What position are you playing in football?"

"Last time I was in the goal."

"How often do you play?" The answer was inaudible. "Do you play with your glasses on?"

"I don't play much now."

"Are you playing chess at school? You should be president of the chess club."

Maurice blushed. "There are some better than me," and checked Joel deftly.

"Do you play at school?" Joel battled on, less now for his brother's sake than in response to his father's silent attendance upon their dialogue.

"I watch," Maurice checked Joel again.

"Why don't you play?"

Maurice mumbled, "The boys don't like me much."

His mother, entering the room now, laden with the fruits of her toil, grimaced horribly at Joel in token of deepest guile. "You remember how you hated your first year, Joel?" She set the table

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round the chess-board. "Day after day you came home with such a face, it was tragic. But the minute you were in the second form—a miracle! Your whole life was changed. Week-ends you couldn't wait for Monday morning."

His father, rising from his corner, made a contemptuous noise in his throat.

"Honestly, Ma!" Maurice growled without raising his eyes.

Joel bared his teeth at her. "As I recall, I was form-leader in my first year and captain of junior first-eleven football."

"You're a liar!" His mother, outraged, threw her tactics to the winds. "Never in your life did you take the faintest interest in sports. It was murder trying to get you out of the house in the most glorious weather."

Joel waited for her exit, noting painfully, because it had been a thing undreamed-of ten years ago, how his father was crowding the table with cutlery, increasingly now occupying his leisure as a part-time domestic. "And football?" He persisted, "don't you play football now either?"

"No."

"What you need," his mother returned undaunted, "is confidence. Tomorrow you walk into school, head up, shoulders back." She demonstrated.

"At ease!" Joel roared, watching for his father's slight smile.

"Check-mate," said Maurice. "Do you want another game, Joel? I'll play with a handicap."

"It's enough. Leave him alone," his father spoke up suddenly, simultaneously with his mother, "he hasn't eaten for three months. Heaven alone knows what you ate there."

"Quails and manna," said Joel (for his father), "and missionaries" (for his mother); then, as if automatically, though he had spent in all no more than five months at home in the past eight years, and had utterly abandoned every observance since his initial departure, he leaned over to the top drawer of the sideboard, took out a skull cap, covered his head, and enacted the ritual of washing hands and breaking bread before he ate. From the apostate son this token in tribute to his father, whom it does not please, who no longer cares. Because I discarded the faith, because I discarded only the faith, I am excluded, though I participate, my presence is unacknowledged, though he knows I participate, must participate, at his secret and perpetual festival of suffering. Without that I have no justification, no continuity, no source. Without that I am unable to explain myself.

"Bed," his mother addressed Maurice, who was playing again, against himself, "and leave the chess downstairs." Maurice stood up, muttering. Joel, making a momentary effort to disclaim propinquity of blood, surveyed his brother. Ungainly, bent, and narrow-chested, his movements unsure, *weak*, it remained nonetheless surprising that the

boy's beauty, for all its erratic distribution, could fail to affect the most impartial beholder. His head was burdened with ears and spectacles; but look between the ears and behind the spectacles, and you could not but be moved by the depth and delicacy that met you there. It *invites* contempt though, his poignancy, Joel recognized with heavy-hearted tenderness modified by impatience; he's too big now to be still so wet about the ears. "Stand up straight and stop mumbling," he shouted.

"It's a pity on the child," his mother sighed the next day over Joel's noon breakfast, "you should have seen him this morning, his face was green. He grieves inwardly, you see, he's like Dad. He bottles it all up. It doesn't come out. You could help him, give him confidence, you and Marianne." And wontedly, sharp off the mark, her daughter's name sufficient preamble, she mounted her hobby-horse. "She's such a beautiful girl now, Joel, everyone says so."

Joel grinned. If ever there was an ugly sister it was Marianne, and if ever a sister, knowing this, needed no reassurance, came home bearing her sheaves regardless, it was Marianne.

"I wish," his mother assumed her rare voice of oil and honey, "now that you're back you could take her out a bit."

"But she's always out, Ma." It was an old game.

"You know what I mean. You could introduce her to some nice people." She hesitated, and anxiety took her whole face into its charge. "I don't want to say, there's a very nice man, a lawyer—he'd be perfect if only he were Jewish—he worships Marianne. She wants to marry him. He's begging her to. I'm terrified for Dad."

"Does Dad know anything?" Joel said at last.

"How can I tell him? He couldn't bear it. As it is he grumbles plenty about the children. That's the one thing I can't stand. Not a man in a million has children like his."

"What does he grumble about us?"

"Oh, he worries about you wandering in strange lands." She produced her veteran bribe shamelessly. "He'd be a different man if you settled down. I don't know what you're waiting for. You should have children. You love children. You should have children of your own."

"I do not love children, and why does it always have to be children of one's *own*?" Joel hissed exasperatedly. "What's wrong with other people's children? Other people's children are all right."

"Yes, I know," his mother replied wistfully, "but yours would be different."

"Different." Because of the inheritance in store for them, because of their grandfather's story of 1939 that was the end of the world, the whole world.

"And Marianne," his mother relentlessly pursued her darling theme, "every day he asks what'll become of her."

"What do you mean, 'what'll become of her'?"

Joel roared. "Being single isn't a mortal disease."

"Oh you don't understand," but her express irritation was a plea, not a dismissal, "she's twenty-seven. She needs to be married. I know Marianne, I know what she wants. She's not like you. I feel, I can't tell you, I feel crushed with worry about her." Joel was ill-prepared for so unwonted a confession. "She's twenty-seven years old," he began to shout in panic, "she's not your baby now. You've no right to worry."

"I can't help worrying, Joel," this time she dismissed him, "I know what she'll suffer. If it were only me I'd say marry him. I've got a broad back. But Dad'll eat his heart out, he'll punish himself, you know what he is. Talk to her, Joel, she'll listen to you. It isn't a good thing. Marianne's a religious person—the children will be Jewish, he'll be an outsider. It isn't a good thing."

SHE MOVED toward the kitchen, limping from a childhood injury to the left leg. Maurice limped too, on his right leg, from a fall in his infancy. Joel had watched them once running together with desperate intensity to catch a bus, and missing it. Unbidden, as was its uncouth habit, without warning and with undue ferocity, memory shelled his precious entrenchments with the image; and hard upon it, with a logic best known to itself, threw up so precisely his father's unvarying farewell at Joel's every leave-taking ("I wish you a pleasant journey," he would say to the son in whom he no longer recognized anything he could take for granted, adding no more the old pleas and injunctions) that Joel winced now as he had then at the iron interdict against his mute protestation of keeping faith with his father.

In the kitchen Joel's mother was talking to herself. "Oh I wish," she was saying, "Oh I wish."

Let them suffer. Let my father carry his burden uncomforted, let my mother hobble after him till the end of her life, let the defenselessness in Marianne's eyes increase, let the tremor in Maurice's mouth not diminish; but don't let me see it. Don't let me have to look. "Stop talking to yourself!" Joel screamed. "I come home, for God's sake, once in a millennium, and all you can fetch up is sorrow for a welcome."

"What are you talking about?" his mother came through the door, alarmed and astonished. "There's no sorrow in this house, thank God. Marianne'll be all right. Dad doesn't know anything. You're a worrier. You worry too much."

"Just stop talking to yourself, that's all I'm asking," Joel dismissed her with exaggerated calm, as if it had been she who had screamed; he bent over her handbag at his feet, and studiously examined the title of a book in it. "Are you reading Cellini, Ma?" he asked as she did not move.

"Oh what a life that man had!" her absorbed face lit up at once as he knew it would. "The way he'd just kill a man for cheating him, the

devil! Everybody cheated him, he never cheated anybody." Peppering her disquisition for greater force with adjectives in not her own but her mother's native tongue, she hurtled on. The Bialystock children's introduction to literature had come about entirely in this way—through her idiosyncratic interpretation so powerful that the originals were later to seem pale reflections of her exegeses. "That Becky Sharp!" she would say, breath sharply inhaled, eyes closed against an unmentionable horror, the blood ebbing from her cheeks, "that Jonas Chuzzlewit! That Jaggars!" The distinction between works of fiction and history was for her negligible. Thus she spellbound her children when they were little, and confused them for years. The day Joel discovered the works of Rider Haggard to be fictitious he rounded on her, disenchanted and furious, "But, Ma, they're not true!"

"Oh, I'm sorry," she said, "honestly I thought they were," and fell to musing, "how could he *invent* such things? That Allan Quatermain!" again the confounded gasp, the closed eyes, "what he *went* through!" It was also the films he had seen with her that Joel remembered best, for the subversive commentary with which she banished all conceivable ambiguity. "She's madly in love with him," she would hiss into Joel's ear. "He's a liar, he knows she's got money. Poor girl, is she falling in!"

The timely arrival of Marianne halted the discourse on Cellini and returned the raconteuse with all speed to the kitchen. Marianne greeted Joel without surprise, "Hello, Dollyface, what a lovely figure you've got! Did you bring me anything?"

"Ma said you'd grown beautiful," Joel exhibited offensive disappointment.

"Has she said anything about . . .?" Marianne whispered nervously.

"Man. Lawyer. Gentile."

Marianne hushed him. "Is she worried?" They went upstairs together. "He says he'll become Jewish," she said imploringly.

"By blood transfusion," Joel replied, instantaneously arraying his internal standing army against advancing woe. "Marry him, if you can, but know what you're doing first. If you marry him and go on screaming about Dad, you're finished."

"If Philip becomes Jewish, though . . .," Marianne pleaded.

"That won't cut any ice with Dad. Marry Philip, if you've got the stomach, but don't suffer afterward."

"No," Marianne said, "wherever I was after that, I'd never stop worrying about Dad."

"Daddy," Joel muttered before he could stop himself, and turned it into a cough within a second. Get that lively epitaph to agony off your mind. Excise it skillfully. Hebrew Daddy, stranger of strangers. Daddy and the-Lord-thy-God, Daddy

and separateness, Daddy and I'm-not-English, Daddy and I'm-Jewish.

"You can't do it," Joel said with finality, "I could, but not you. I've worked since I was younger than Maurice at separating myself. You haven't begun. But even I . . ." he stopped as the irresistible voice of his identity declared itself from the pit of his stomach. My wife, whoever she is, must know in her bones what this means, she must know absolutely what it is.

"What do you think Dad would do?" Marianne would not spare him.

"Multiply his mourning," Joel regarded her misery unseeingly. "Shall I meet Philip?"

"I'll ask him," she replied with caution, "but don't frighten him, Joel. He's not very intellectual."

"Ah," Joel nodded, "full of charm that works like virtue, and graying at the temples."

"He's a dolly," Marianne smiled lovingly.

THE FRONT DOOR banged. Sounds ascended of Maurice exchanging high-pitched words with his mother, then the thud of her limp upstairs. She entered the bedroom, a knife and a half-peeled potato in her hand, wearing her conspiratorial face. "I think he's been set on. He's just told me he can't go on," she whispered. They all moved downstairs. "You have to toughen up, Maurice," Marianne greeted her brother briskly, selecting E to K of the London directories, "I'll find out about judo classes now."

"What you need, Maurice," his mother began to polish the candlesticks for the imminent Sabbath, "is confidence. Tomorrow you walk into Shul, head up, shoulders back . . ."

Joel scanned his brother's day's-end, world's-end face, and propelled him to the stairs. "What do you mean, you can't go on?" he demanded in the bathroom. "You can go on!" He began to shout against the noise of running water and the afflicted face.

Maurice was not intimidated. "I'm outside society," he said. "They won't play with me. The teachers are peculiar."

"What do you mean, *peculiar*? All teachers are peculiar. They're *supposed* to be peculiar."

"These ones are different." Maurice was unmoved.

Joel said, "You're the one who's peculiar, if you ask me."

"I know I'm dopey," Maurice answered directly, "but I can't be outside society."

"You just get on with your work," Joel advised without inner conviction, "you'll be back in society soon."

"No," Maurice spoke from understood experience, "if your work's bad, you can still be in society; but however good your work is, if you're outside society you've got nothing."

Joel said, "What do you want to do?"

"I want to go to City Day. A lot of boys I knew

at Jewish Primary go there now. I would have, if we'd lived in that area." He added, as a sop to Joel's stated predilection for assimilation, "only half the boys there are Jewish."

"What's your present quarrel with school to do with *that*?"

"I've got friends at City Day," was Maurice's only answer.

"I'll try to get you a transfer," Joel said. "You know how impossible it is, but I'll try. But you know how impossible it is. What if they won't?"

"I'll be finished," Maurice replied without expression.

"I'll get you a transfer then," Joel promised. "Now get washed."

HE CLOSED WITH Maurice's headmaster the following Monday. "You've got the words," his mother said, "you know how to express yourself." Maurice lay silently in bed, his real and noxious sickness unskillfully concealed beneath a feigned one.

"My brother feels like a pariah," Joel began.

"He's a very foolish boy," the headmaster replied at once. "Let me tell you what happened last Friday. There was bedlam in his classroom that morning. The blackboard was plastered with filth, about your brother."

"Filth?"

"Filthy words, about your brother. And I can't say I blame the culprits. There's been a particularly unpleasant smell in that classroom for weeks now. On Friday the boys traced it to your brother's desk. He'd been hoarding sandwiches, left-overs from his lunch—some of them must have been months old. The back of his desk was packed with them, they were black with decay. There was something—it must once have been egg—the smell was shocking."

Joel emitted his odious ear-splitting laugh. "Exactly the same thing," he shook joyfully, "my sister and I did exactly the same thing at just his age. You don't know my mother's sandwiches." His smile of gleeful reminiscence faded only at the headmaster's prolonged silence. "It never occurred to me to throw away what I couldn't eat," he blundered on absurdly, "my pockets were always thick with crumbs. I carried old sandwiches about for weeks in my satchel. They stuck to my books, my desk was crammed with them . . ."

"Your brother denied he'd put them there," the headmaster interrupted coldly. "Is he in the habit of lying?"

Joel cursed his former levity. "No more than anyone else, child or adult, and for the same reasons."

"I can understand why he's unpopular," the headmaster counter-attacked, "and I don't blame the boys."

"Maurice has an unusual background" (an old compulsion to explain, to reveal the center, to include and be included, rose irrepressibly), "he

has a mature apprehension of loss, he knows what it is, he's been taught it from infancy, his father's entire family was destroyed, Maurice has never been allowed to forget it, he's exceptionally aware of his Jewishness . . ." Joel stopped abruptly, disgusted too late with his audience and the rising supplication in his voice.

"There's no anti-Semitism in this school, of course," the headmaster answered promptly, "I'd never allow it." He added with barely concealed contempt, "We have many Jewish boys here who are perfectly happy."

"I know, I know," Joel said hopelessly. "The fact remains that Maurice is friendless. His parents feel that he's too young to be compelled to endure his isolation. They would like him to be transferred to the City Day where he's got friends."

The headmaster responded well, almost eagerly. "On the whole it's a good idea. Give him a fresh start. Of course, it's escaping."

"All children know what rejection is, but intermittently," Joel fought to win at least the last round. "Maurice has known it consistently for months now."

"Perhaps your brother should attend a Child Guidance Clinic," the headmaster suggested, ostensibly with kindly intent, "his coordination may be faulty."

Very like, very like. But the world he and his kosher sandwiches emerge from each morning is itself split. Coordinate there the living with the dead, the God of mercy with the God of murder, the careless present with the all-knowing past.

"That's very possible," Joel agreed heartily; and at that they parted, the transfer to be made, Maurice to be saved.

The plaintiff was sitting up in bed, his skullcap on his frail head, his spectacles on his long nose, browsing in a volume of his ancestral folklore. He smiled anxiously as Joel appeared. "I think I've got you your transfer," Joel said at once. "What words did the boys write on the board about you?"

Maurice was silent. "Why didn't you tell me?" Joel demanded.

"I can't tell you the words, Joel," Maurice said.

"You live in a Gentile world," Joel declared, "it's time you acknowledged that. All people are people—all three thousand million of them."

"I know that," Maurice replied, "but it's my religion. People have died for it."

"And ceased to be people. The dead are not *people*," Joel was about to contend, but stopped short at that moment as he recognized perfectly in Maurice's statement the child's representation of his own condition.

JEW, GENTILES & THE NEW ESTABLISHMENT

Dennis H. Wrong

MOST AMERICAN sociologists believe in the ideal of an "open" society in which equality of opportunity generally prevails—and equality of opportunity means, of course, the opportunity to become unequal as a result of personal talent, effort, and achievement. The doctrine of leveling—that is, of a fraternal commonwealth in which all social differences are seen as secondary and even accidental—has not played much of a role in the ideology of American liberalism, although it has been central to British and European socialist thought.

American liberals, accordingly, have tended to concentrate their efforts on removing the barriers to mobility represented by hereditary class and racial or ethnic differences, and American sociologists have demonstrated the existence of these barriers with muckraking zeal. Such a standpoint has readily associated the inheritance of status through family membership with racial and ethnic discrimination, which denies the right of access to high social positions and rewards to certain minority groups on the ground that they are genetically unfitted. In *The Protestant Establishment*,* E. Digby Baltzell attempts to revise this perspective. Baltzell shares the liberal indignation over racial and ethnic discrimination—indeed his book is partly devoted to documenting and condemning the discrimination practiced against Jews since the 1880's by upper-class white Protestants. Baltzell does not, however, share the concomitant liberal opposition to an elite recruited primarily by birth. Instead, he argues the traditional conservative idea (rarely found among his fellow American sociologists) that a complex changing society needs a stable upper class based on familial continuity as a training ground for responsible political leadership.

Turning the tables on the liberal critics of hereditarian theories of human nature, Baltzell contends that aristocrats are made rather than born. For this very reason, he insists, we should value and preserve the upper-class institutions and agencies that make them: private schools, colleges, clubs, and elite suburbs. But access to these sanctuaries should be open to all who merit it. When men of talent or wealth are excluded

solely on the grounds of race, national origin, or religion, the aristocratic principle is corrupted by the opposing principle of caste, which appeals to heredity, rather than training and moral character, to legitimize the superior position of the upper class. The men of talent and wealth who are rejected retaliate by rejecting the political leadership of the upper class; minority ethnic groups set themselves against the establishment; and even a section of the elite itself defects, accusing its peers of betraying their own best traditions of civic responsibility. Thus, in a democratic society, the upper-class elite eventually finds itself bypassed by politics and history, even though it retains its wealth and economic power as well as its control over the exclusive institutions that are its primary habitat. This, according to Baltzell, is largely what has happened to the Protestant establishment in America over the past three decades as a consequence of the long-standing conflict within it between the principles of aristocracy and caste.

WHAT MAKES Baltzell's analysis of the evolution of the American elite superior to the accounts of earlier writers from Veblen to W. L. Warner, not to mention journalists like Cleveland Amory, is that he exposes the connections between high social status and political and economic power. In doing so, however, he leads one to question the relevance to contemporary America of his model of an aristocratic ruling class. Indeed, his description of the gradual loss of political power by the traditional Protestant upper class of the Eastern seaboard works to persuade us that the process is irreversible, despite the fact that this elite has produced leaders of the liberal wing of the Democratic party such as Franklin Roosevelt, Averill Harriman, Joseph Clark, and others who emerge as the exemplars of his model. Writing before Dallas, Baltzell also reads too much long-range significance into the Eastern private school-Ivy League ambience of the Kennedy administration, which is the same error that C. Wright Mills—attacking what Baltzell wishes to defend—made in *The Power Elite* with regard to the Eisenhower administration.

Although Mills's "power elite" is not identical with Baltzell's "Protestant establishment," Mills attributed enormous importance to upper-class family bonds and old-school-tie loyalties. He was led to do so because he needed to find some plausible basis for the cohesiveness and community of interests he imputed to the small group of

* Random House, 429 pp., \$6.95.

political, business, and military archons who, he claimed, directed American society. Baltzell knows better, and his book may be read as a refutation of at least this aspect of Mills's theory, for he rightly maintains that the upper class has lost political power, although his conviction that its decline is the result of caste barriers erected to preserve its ethnic and religious homogeneity is open to question.

Be that as it may, the forces in American society working against the restoration to political leadership of a traditional aristocracy—even a liberalized one—are far too powerful to be arrested by the belated removal of caste barriers. Among these forces is the movement westward of population and industry, already reflected in shifts in the political center of gravity in both political parties. The new men of the West and the Southwest are Protestant and they certainly are not lacking in the crude caste impulses that Baltzell excoriates. (I understand that the expensive hostelry which served as Barry Goldwater's Phoenix campaign headquarters on election night was until recently restricted to "Caucasians only.") No doubt these new men will mellow in time, but it is hard to believe that the mellowing agents will be the tradition-bearing institutions created by the old Eastern elite. There are not enough Grotons and Harvards, which is why it is the California system of state colleges and universities that represents the future.

Yet even if the American upper class had behaved like the 19th-century British aristocracy that Baltzell, following Tocqueville, so much admires, would the outcome have been so different? Modern history is the graveyard of aristocracies, both those that have bent with the gale of egalitarianism and those that have resisted it. The real value of Baltzell's book as social criticism, therefore, lies less in his argument for a stabilizing upper class and against the advocates of a dead-level egalitarianism, whom he labels "Marxists," than in the over-all perspective which he summed up for a *Newsweek* reporter: "I think it's a lousy situation in this country when the Protestants control business, the Catholics politics, and the Jews intellectual life." This is, of course, an over-simplification that applies mainly to the big cities of the East and Middle West. Even so, Baltzell's sense that there is a real trend in America toward ethnic-religious separatism is accurate, and it is this that makes his protest against continuing "WASP" exclusiveness more than merely another reminder that a few pockets of anti-Semitism and religious animosity still exist in American life.

One can also sympathize with Baltzell's insistence on the value of preserving the traditional upper-class schools and colleges. If it is quixotic to see them as nurseries of future statesmen, they are nevertheless indispensable as centers of resistance to the vocationalism, present-minded-

ness, and pallid middle-class conformism of a public education which is subject to all the bureaucratic and political pressures of our mass society. Edgar Z. Friedenberg has recently argued that the cause of educational diversity and cultural variety is served by maintaining schools and colleges created by the old elite, provided they are not discriminatory. And indeed, Baltzell's review of the changed admissions policies of these schools and his discussion of the extra-curricular interests and political sympathies of Andover and Exeter students, shows that they have ceased to be caste institutions.

THE HEART OF Baltzell's book, however, is his account of modern American history from the point of view of the struggle between aristocracy and caste within the Protestant elite. He tells of the coming of the immigrants and of the ideological response of those "brahmin intellectuals" who embraced Social Darwinist and racist theories; of the creation in the Gilded Age of exclusive suburbs, resorts, and schools; and of the solidification and extension of these caste barriers against Jews and other ethnic groups in the 1920's. This is, of course, a familiar tale, and Baltzell draws on the familiar historical, biographical, and literary sources—the opinions and careers of Henry Adams, John Jay Chapman, and A. Lawrence Lowell; the scholarship of Hofstadter, Handlin, and Schlesinger, Jr.; and the literary evidence of Fitzgerald, Mencken, and Marquand.

The more interesting facet of Baltzell's narrative is that he counterpoints each chapter on the rise of caste barriers with one on the opposition to them by members of the Protestant upper class. Thus the anti-Semitic John Jay Chapmans and the racist Madison Grants are contrasted with Charles Eliot (President of Harvard and foe of the Immigration League), Woodrow Wilson, and the two Roosevelts. Baltzell also emphasizes the contribution to the intellectual attack on racist doctrines of old-stock scholars like Dewey, Beard, and Charles Horton Cooley, and the important role of patricians who defected from the Republican party in the Wilson administration, the New Deal, and the Kennedy administration, as well as of those who participated in the municipal reform movements of New York and Philadelphia. This reading of recent political and intellectual history is, to be sure, a highly selective one: the rise of ethnic minorities and organized labor as a major force in American life recedes into the background, while the New Deal, the debate over American entry into World War II, and McCarthyism are seen as episodes in the struggle for the soul of the old elite. But Baltzell does not pretend to be writing a comprehensive history; and his evidence that American liberalism, together with the environmentalist and anti-racist perspectives of contemporary social

science, are indebted to the Protestant patrician tradition, provides a necessary corrective to interpretations which treat both American politics and intellectual life exclusively in terms of conflict between classes and ethnic groups.

Baltzell goes on to show that if the aristocratic principle today is embodied in the old Eastern colleges and private schools, the caste principle remains entrenched in the suburban country clubs and the metropolitan men's clubs. "Country club anti-Semitism" has become something of a joke among Jews, now that they are so heavily, and to all appearances permanently, concentrated in the upper reaches of the occupational and income hierarchy. Perhaps Baltzell takes it a bit too seriously; but then he is concerned over anti-Semitism as a blot on the best traditions of the establishment rather than as a social problem or an actual hardship for Jews in its own right. His outrage also diverts him from any discussion of the tendency of Jews and other minorities to create parallel structures of ethnically homogeneous resorts and clubs, thus perpetuating the kind of separatism he deplores.

THE metropolitan clubs, however, are another matter altogether. Baltzell demonstrates that their denial of membership to Jews is closely related to the almost exclusively Anglo-Saxon composition of the top leadership of our largest corporations. His chief horrible example is the Duquesne Club of Pittsburgh, which is the informal meeting place for executives of the steel industry. Since the major corporations have not yet adapted to the ethnic diversity of the white population and to the economic and educational rise of the children of immigrants, it is small wonder that they have not made the slightest contribution to winning full civil rights and equal job opportunities for Negroes. Baltzell quotes a Coca-Cola executive who, when asked about his company's stand on the racial issue, replied: "Our problem is to walk a very fine line and be friends with everybody. I've heard the phrase 'Stand Up and Be Counted' for so long from both sides that I'm sick of it. Sure we want to stand up and be counted, but on both sides of the fence. For God's sake, why don't they let us go on selling a delicious and refreshing beverage to anybody who's got a gullet he can pour it down."

The genteel anti-Semitism of the metropolitan clubs frequented by executives is further reflected in the college recruiting policies of the corporations. In turn, the executives who enter politics give local Republican organizations their predominantly Anglo-Saxon cast, though after each GOP debacle at the polls Republican leaders fill the air with demands that the party "broaden its base" by attracting other ethnic groups. Baltzell wants the corporations to reform themselves: "Top managers must be 'uncommon men' and take the lead rather than wait to be

pushed by FEPC legislation, the NAACP, the Anti-Defamation League, or the American Civil Liberties Union. Moreover, if management waits until the state takes the initiative, it will have the statism it deserves. The national corporation must now be seen as a moral community whose duty it is to set standards on a national scale."

The trouble with this demand is that today's corporate elite overlaps, but is not identical with, the old Protestant establishment. There is little likelihood that the best civic traditions of the latter will spread throughout the business world. The aggressive and politically retrograde role of Western business communities in backing Goldwater and financing radical-right causes is no transitory phenomenon. Even the radical right, to be sure, strives to avoid the appearance of anti-Semitism, but this is hardly reason to believe that it can provide responsible moral and political leadership on a national scale. Baltzell is surely right to treat anti-Semitism as evidence of caste irresponsibility; however, it does not follow that its disappearance will insure the flourishing of the aristocratic *noblesse oblige* he extols.

Baltzell is most illuminating when he confines himself to the Eastern elite, which he knows at first hand and whose Philadelphia branch he has previously studied. He has a particularly good eye for crucial generational differences. The Wilsons and the Roosevelts were patrician reformers who never quite overcame their upper-class reserve and distaste for members of the ethnic minority groups politically allied with them. The great divide separating them from the Kennedy generation, Baltzell suggests, was service in the armed forces during World War II. This experience most nearly realized "the American ideal of equality of opportunity and a hierarchically organized social structure. . . . It is hard to believe that down in Washington on the New Frontier the accidents of birth meant much to leaders of men who shared a common war experience, a common educational background and common ideals about our democracy."

THE "COMMON EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND" to which Baltzell refers is, of course, the elite private schools and colleges. Both the faculties and the student bodies of our major universities have during the years since World War II transformed themselves into "ethnic aristocracies drawing on a truly national pool of talent." The kinds of contacts between Jews and non-Jews that now prevail in academic, professional, and intellectual circles may very well prefigure future relations in widening upper-middle-class circles. Although the trend toward ethnic-religious separatism is a reality, there is also, as Baltzell notes, a counter-trend toward greater employment of Jews in some of the newer industries (especially

in technical positions), and toward increased participation by Jews in politics, civic groups, and community-wide voluntary associations. It is probably too early to say which trend is likely to predominate, although one may doubt whether the attitude of the patrician elite will be quite as decisive as Baltzell believes.

Yet even in university circles, relations between Jews and non-Jews are not as free of frictions and covert animosities as is suggested by the remark of a professor whom Baltzell quotes: "It is not that *some* of my best friends are Jews—as a matter of fact, *most* of my best friends are." The old caste attitudes and stereotypes of the Jew as *parvenu* have little to do with these newer relations and the particular tensions they breed. Baltzell is so concerned with the residue of classic genteel anti-Semitism that he provides scant guidance on this score. For example, he cites numerous instances of social discrimination against prominent men of Jewish origin who have attended the best schools, married non-Jews, and have even converted, or had fathers who converted, to Christianity. (He even repeats a few stories of slights suffered by Barry Goldwater.) These incidents dramatically underline the irrationality of surviving caste barriers, but one wants to ask: What about men who haven't converted, who still value their Jewish heritage, whether in religious or secular terms? Are there not subtle differences in character and style between Jews and non-Jews that the former may wish to maintain? What about the whole issue of preserving Jewish identity in prosperous middle-class America?

THIS is not Baltzell's subject and it is perhaps unfair to tax him for ignoring it. The Protestant caste attitudes he examines have little to do with the kinds of relations between Jews and non-Jews that are now developing. Undoubtedly, the group images formed in present academic, professional, and intellectual circles reflect the subtle realities of ethnic differences more closely than the standard stereotypes of Jew and goy of an earlier period. More or less accurately, non-Jews in these circles are apt to attribute to Jews such traits as intellectuality, political liberalism, intense parental solicitude with close bonds between mothers and sons, strong attachment to the extended family, a liking for food and physical comforts in general, volubility and emotional expressiveness, fear of violence, and ironic humor. These traits obviously will be perceived only where there is considerable intimacy in informal social contexts. And they may be evaluated either positively or negatively—either "anti-Semitically" or "philo-Semitically," to use labels that are perhaps too strong in this connection.

Jews living in such environments, for their part, perceive certain distinctive WASP traits that also have little to do with formal religious affiliation

or with traditional hostile stereotypes. Again more or less accurately, they often see Anglo-Saxons as emotionally reserved, prone to attach greater value to formally correct manners, inclined to resist contemporary fashions and innovations, loyal to institutional ties but less so to kin, less permissive in child-rearing, and touched with residual asceticism, if not puritanism. These traits, too, may be evaluated positively or negatively.

Thus each group tends to develop new stereotypes of the other as a result of closer contact. The new images, whether favorably or unfavorably evaluated, are far more accurate than the older ones, which are long outdated and were always distorted by projective thinking. Such new contacts between Jews and Anglo-Saxon Protestants in upper-middle-class circles perhaps have little relevance to traditional anti-Semitism or to the character of the dominant elites in American society. Yet they may well be opening a new chapter in the relations between Jews and non-Jews in America.

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* * *

A FAREWELL TO MUÑOZ MARIN

Keith Botsford

ONE NEEDN'T be in Puerto Rico very long to note the presence of Public Relations; the initials stand for both the island and the kind of soft sell that got me down there in the first place: a tropical paradise in which the hills are purple, the beaches yellow, and the races inter-. Here poverty and culture are referred to as Bootstrap and Serenity, and a sometime cellist by the name of Pablo Casals plays the well-paid role of the island's Commander Schweppes.

To be sure, not everything the admen tell us is a lie. Puerto Rico is a sunny, hilly island, some hundred miles long by thirty wide, and almost every bit of it is beautiful. The people are friendly, child-loving (I tend to judge nations by the way they treat their children), ingenious, and ingenuous. The island's problems are many, but not critical: first, because no matter how serious they are, nature is benevolent and life (at least at its basic level) goes on; and second because the island government does try to solve them in a humane fashion. Puerto Rico is less developed than Cuba used to be and more than Jamaica is, but it shares with them much that is specifically Caribbean: a mixture of races, languages, cultures, and economic levels, plus the fact that it is, *per se*, nothing. This means that history is absent, or that

such history as is present is someone else's history, imposed on the island.

There are also cold, hard problems: a 14 per cent rate of unemployment, some scandalous urban blight, and, far more insidious, a new and hideous middle class created by relative prosperity—by that kind of prosperity that just manages to reach over the shoulders of the common man, and is ashamed of its origins, vulgar, racially conscious, and insecure.

What has been achieved in Puerto Rico is no small thing. I won't repeat the statistics—most laymen have no way of knowing what they mean, for lack of a context—but people are plainly better off than they were some twenty years ago when Luis Muñoz Marín (who has only just retired as Governor) first emerged as a leader. Nevertheless, this very improvement has created problems that no one knows how to solve, and no one ever thought would exist as problems.

Twenty years ago, all Puerto Ricans believed that education would solve their problems; they provided it and not much of it is very good. Where do you go from there? Today, there are houses and markets and industries and hotels. But for every problem solved by economic development, a dozen new ones arise.

The achievements of Puerto Rico are based on a special economic relationship to the United States, and are not necessarily sempiternal. They are bound to the general prosperity of the mother-country; but achievements, after all, bring on expectations, and can Puerto Rico satisfy these?

THE FIRST HARD fact that I noticed in Puerto Rico was that all the first-class minds in it could be (and frequently were) crowded into a middle-sized drawing room. One felt a sense of intellectual and cultural underdevelopment far more frequently than one ever felt economic underdevelopment. Specifically, one knew one was in the Province, and at a considerable remove from the Metropolis. This did not mean that there were not great reserves of intelligence. It meant, rather, that intelligence in Puerto Rico, as in many parts of Latin America, lives under special conditions: (a) the poverty of its context makes it seem greater than it actually is; (b) the structures into which it has to fit do not make many demands of it, and hence there is frequent atrophy; and (c) it is so necessary and so over-used that it is perfectly happy to make few demands on itself and to go on being half-used.

The University in which I worked as Assistant to the Chancellor was typical of these problems. It had 21,000 students and had to be staffed and administered. For various reasons involving the "status" of the island, this had to be accomplished largely with local resources. Thus the University was forced into continual compromise: there always had to be a better candidate than X for a vacant deanship; there rarely was.

The University was, next to the Governor's office, the great source of power on the island; hence it, too, was part of politics. The attention paid to political racketeering rather than serious work and independent study, the calculated irresponsibility of some, the petty ambitions within the orbit of a strong man (the Chancellor, Jaime Benítez) reflected, I am sure, a parallel situation around Muñoz. Similarly, the cultural level of the country, despite the Puerto Rican claims made for it, is neither more nor less than what you would expect from an island of three million people to whom no one in the world scene pays particular attention, that neither suffers nor prospers greatly. Like Darío in Nicaragua, an occasional rare figure rises above the surrounding mediocrity and that is that. Why should there be more?

To start with, the linguistic picture is complicated. Few Puerto Ricans even at the University actually command sufficient English, and in any discussion conducted in English, they are at an immediate disadvantage. But why should they speak English at all? American culture, *as culture*, has had almost no impact whatsoever on Puerto Rico. It is not our literature, our music, our art, our architecture, and certainly not our national ethos that has affected Puerto Rico, but simply the manifestations at second hand, at a considerable remove, of the artifacts of this culture, particularly in its economic and material aspects. These are then taken for the whole. The Puerto Rican intellectual (Muñoz definitely not excluded, though he should know better) likes to think of the United States as the Home of Vulgarities and Materialism, and of Puerto Rico as a sweet dwelling place of the spiritual values of Spanish society adapted to a tropical environment. This is myth-making.

HERE is the way Muñoz himself put the problem as long as ago as 1929:

... saving a culture, even an inferior one, from becoming the monkey of another, even a superior one, is a good in itself. And in the present case it is by no means certain that the heritage shared by Puerto Rico is to be unfavorably compared with the heritage to which the blind forces of production and exchange now seek to hook it up.

That states the case plainly enough. Unfortunately, Puerto Rico and all the other countries around the world (such as France) which so greatly fear "Americanization" overlook the simple truth that no such "Americanization" would be taking place if that complex of attitudes and techniques we call American culture were not in itself a very remarkable thing, if the cultures that it threatens were not intrinsically weak in the very areas in which they are threatened, and if "the people" did not feel it as a liberating force.

It is not those "blind forces of production and exchange" which are likely to change Puerto Rico or any other country, but something quite different: the fact that we Americans have long preached self-perfectionism and still believe in it, that we function *outside* tradition and hence feel that nothing is impossible, and that we are decades ahead of all other nations in the realistic appraisal of the extraordinary and constant revolution this century has been. We seem, therefore, very much the culture of the Present Tense.

ONE OF THE cruellest tricks played on Puerto Rico in recent years has been the attempt to raise it to the status of the "showcase of the Americas." It is a fine, an excellent place, but it is relevant only to itself—a fact Latin Americans are quick to recognize. This is because the Puerto Rico created by Muñoz Marin and his colleagues is special. More than special, it is unique, unique in our own history, and unique in the world today.

The problem was posed by Muñoz as far back as 1938, when he, the son of Puerto Rico's great leader for independence from Spain, began his campaign for power by declaring that "status was not an issue" and that what he wanted for his people, before any ideological consideration, was freedom from hunger, from poverty, and from the humiliation of helplessness.

It was a statement of genius, and at the same time, a statement that bore the seeds of disaster. While the economic and social problems of Puerto Rico were being solved—to the extent that this is possible in a tiny tropical island without natural resources—the status question could be kept in abeyance, but once these conditions had been largely eliminated, once the moratorium had passed, what would happen? The truth is that the status of Puerto Rico is an issue, and the question that Muñoz has always evaded is whether this "status" is a political or a cultural problem. I plump strongly for the latter, because though it matters only to a degree how Puerto Rico exists politically or economically, it matters absolutely and to all to know *who* they are, what language they should speak and what books they should read, how they drive their cars and how to use their leisure, what attitudes they take toward women, death, or their children. All these things are involved in the status question. They are not things one decides; they are certainly not things one can leave undecided.

Puerto Rico is a blend—a mixture or a hybrid. This is a fact which some are content to accept and many are not. Some parts of the middle class are more American than the Joneses; others feel this to be demeaning and want an impractical independence. The clear-cut versions of these positions are held by minorities. But in the middle, in the vast majority, everyone feels partly (and at different times) inclined one way or the other. (Muñoz prophetically foresaw this situation in

the speech from which I have already quoted when he said that his people might be destined to become "neither Puerto Rican nor American, but merely puppets of a mongrel state of mind, susceptible to American thinking and proud of Latin thought, subservient to American living and worshipful of the ancestral way of life.")

The ambiguity of the cultural situation has been exacerbated by the ambiguity of the institutional relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. The basic political question—whether Puerto Rico is a "nation"—has remained so long undecided that each of these tendencies, to "Americanization" or to some form of Puerto Rican nationalism, has acquired a political outlet, parties devoted to one or the other position, which have substituted an infinity of half-truths, of the sort that always underlie the struggle for power, for the kind of intelligent thought that is required if Puerto Rican society is ever to arrive at a clear definition of itself.

The desperate irony involved in all this is that the status of Puerto Rico in no way depends on the islanders themselves: the political decision belongs to the U.S. Congress. It is this situation that is so galling to Puerto Rican nationalists, open or concealed; and it is also this situation which creates in Puerto Rico that mentality which other Latin Americans quite rightly call "colonial." Unfortunately, however, no political decision can ever alter a culture, and it is Puerto Rican culture that creates the ambiguity about the island's status, just as it is its culture that may one day solve the status question.

For the time being, the argument is basically economic. There is no doubt whatever that Muñoz Marin is right in his belief that Puerto Rico would probably sink to the level of a Dominican Republic without natural resources if granted independence. But the argument for independence does not use economic reasoning. It is a matter of Faith and Morals. It rests on two points: some absurd pretensions to a specifically Puerto Rican culture (based on the Spanish language) and the historical necessity of national aspirations.

Muñoz himself has never been clear as to where he stands on this issue. He appears internally torn between the two alternatives of greater assimilation to the United States and independence. He started as an *independentista*; it is said that in his heart (or at least in his wife's, which counts for as much) he remains one. At the same time, he has always realized that the argument for independence rests on shaky ground. It is certainly arguable that in more than half-a-century of United States rule, just as the English language has made little headway, Spanish has lost no ground, so that Spanish civilization, to the degree that it ever existed in Puerto Rico, is hardly threatened. It could also be argued that Puerto Rican culture, around which the *independentistas* build such a structure, really is *this specific blend*

of elements, and that to revive the Spanish colonial days with their accompanying half-hearted folklore, is to opt out of precisely that which makes Puerto Rico even moderately interesting: one of the few places where there has been some blending, psychological and cultural, of the Anglo-Saxon and the Latin worlds.

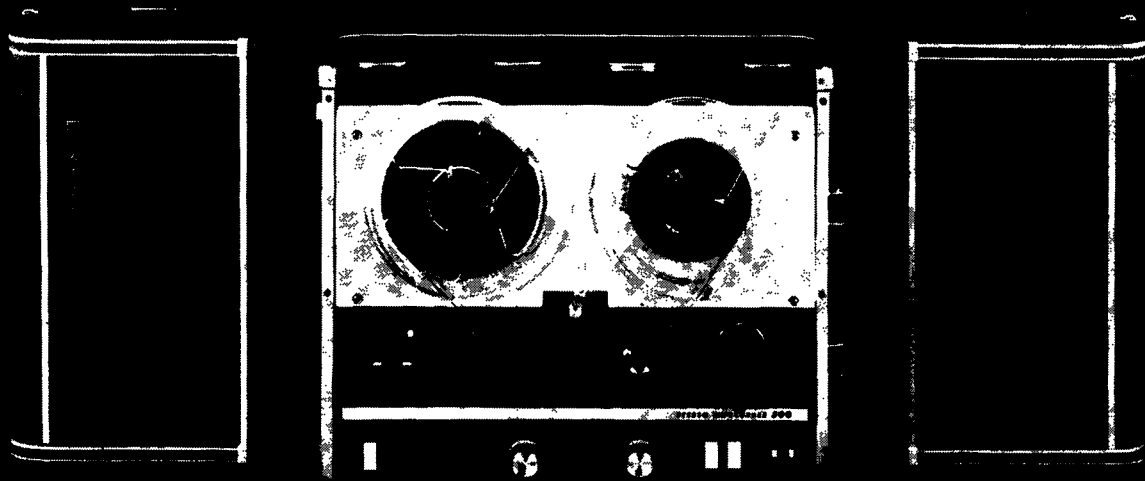
It is around this basic compromise that Muñoz Marin has built his political life, and for all its defects it is hard to see how his version is not superior to any other proposed for Puerto Rico. And if Latin America despises Puerto Rico and Muñoz Marin for this, I find it to their shame, an ugly tribute to the deforming spirit of the Latins' new "nationalism," and to their greater love of words than of deeds, of concepts than facts, of rhetoric than reality. For I think Puerto Rico, except for the historical accident by which, almost inattentively on both sides, it became an appendage of the United States without rights in

the United States, and an economic "colony" without a corresponding cultural gain, is actually the kind of place most Latin Americans, given the chance, would want to live in: a place where things work, the economy progresses, where there is order, stability, freedom, tolerance, education, and dignity. And the greater part of this is due to Luis Muñoz Marin.

History will probably have a mixed verdict; the island was given a mixed beginning. It has made a virtue of its difficulties, but has not yet recognized that these difficulties are its ultimate virtue, have to be lived with, defined, accepted, and reflected in its political institutions as they are in its culture.

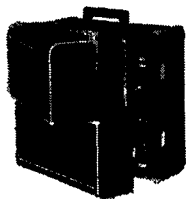
KEITH BOTSFORD, *author of the novel, The March-Man (Viking), is now living in England after having spent the past few years in Latin America. His last previous contribution to COMMENTARY was "My Friend Fuentes" (February 1965).*

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"MORBID-MINDEDNESS"

AN AMERICAN DREAM. By NORMAN MAILER. Dial Press. 270 pp. \$4.95.

Reviewed by RICHARD POIRIER

WILLIAM JAMES probably would have admired Norman Mailer's *An American Dream*. And since to read James is more instructive about contemporary literature than to read the reviews of Mailer's book, there's a chance that the novel will find the respected place in history that literary journalism refuses to give it. Defining (in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*) the necessary antagonism, even in 1902, between the "healthy-minded" and the "morbid-minded," James offers a fable for those reviewers—especially Joseph Epstein in the *New Republic*, Philip Rahv in the *New York Review of Books*, Elizabeth Hardwick in *Partisan Review*—who have found in this latest of Mailer's works a pretext for moralisms that are witty and articulated almost in direct ratio to their critical irrelevance:

To this latter way, the morbid-minded way, as we might call it, healthy-mindedness pure and simple seems unspeakably blind and shallow. To the healthy-minded way, on the other hand, the way of the sick soul seems unmanly and diseased. With their grubbing in rat-holes instead of living in the light; with their manufacture of fears, and preoccupation with every unwholesome kind of misery, there is something almost obscene about these children of wrath and cravers of a second birth. If religious intolerance and hanging and burning could again become the order of the day, there is little doubt that, however it may have been in the past, the healthy-minded would at present show themselves the less indulgent party of the two. In our own attitude, not yet abandoned, of impartial onlookers, what are we to say to this quarrel? It seems to me that we are bound to say that morbid-mindedness ranges over

the wider scale of experience, and that its survey is the one that overlaps.

Of course *An American Dream* isn't good or bad simply because it deals with aspects of life seldom treated with candor in serious literature, and even less frequently with Mailer's relish of detail. It is in fact an introspective novel, and in reading it—a very different activity from thinking afterward about those Terrible Things done by its hero—I was most often reminded, for comparison, of the recent poetry of Robert Lowell. Mailer and Lowell are alone, I think, in having created the style of contemporary introspection, at once violent, educated, and cool. Their language substantially extends the literary resources of English, and people will later turn to them in any effort to determine the shapes our consciousness has been taking.

Perhaps the reason for so many uncomprehending reviews is that Mailer put everyone on the wrong scent, especially those with the dubious advantage of having a nose for what a book is like even before the author is done with it. Mailer himself invited us to take the novel as yet another of his public displays. He vulgarly pushed himself, as would-be boxer, would-be mayor of New York, he trivialized the very images that are as often part of his nightmares, and he managed even to make his often bright talk about writing into a parody of Hemingway, which was parody enough to begin with. His antics are all, as related to this wondrously private book, simply worth forgetting. In this novel, and despite his big fuss about serializing it in *Esquire* (just like Dostoevski used to do in the magazine *Russky Vestnik!*), Mailer is not at all interested in advertising his or anyone else's private life. What most of the prose reveals instead is a nearly impersonal honesty about the tightest knots in himself and about the related, Gordian knots of contemporary history. This is our history as Hawthorne might have written it:

just as private and nearly as melodramatic and allegorical.

When I refer, then, to Mailer's "self," it is not to the careerist who has sometimes resembled the hero of this novel, Stephen Rojack. It is rather to the writer who can be discovered at work in the language of this novel. He needs, for his purposes, a style that prevents anything like self-advertisement, that even resists translation into vocabularies that have some public authority, like those of psychoanalytic theory. In fact, not many contemporary writers have with such audacity treated the "findings" of psychoanalytical literature—of Freud, Reich, Norman O. Brown—as only another form of mythologizing. What the style registers is the war within Stephen Rojack of health and morbidity, creative sexuality and a destructive perversity, God and the Devil, the Devil's hideout being associated in the book with the anus and the discovery of it with buggery. Rojack's acts of self-degradation are referable less to any ascertainable neuroses within him than to the same public and political life that appeals to Mailer's own acts of self-debasement. And yet, quite marvelously, the result isn't a novel of displaced personal responsibility, as Bellow's *Herzog* often is: Rojack's perversities create in him a desire for health, associated here with the privacy, duty, difficulty of loving another, a desire that involves, implicitly and without cant, the acceptance of guilt for the nature of his own life and for the ruinous life around him.

Perversity is in many ways the subject and the villain of the book, or at least the evidence of villainy. One senses it most superficially in the great many disgusted and rather boyish allusions to homosexuality. Thus the kind of deception in which Rojack would have been involved had he remained (though privately obsessed with death) a public figure and politico, is compared to that of male film star idols, adored publicly by women

but "homosexual and private in their lives. They must live with insanity on every breath." Mailer is not much interested in homosexuality itself but only as one of the symptoms of other kinds of sickness within society, and the homosexual figures from his earlier novels who come to mind are General Cummings in *The Naked and the Dead* or Leroy Hollingsworth in *Barbary Shore*—men in whom there is a direct connection between sexual deviation and the destructive assertions of public and private power—rather than Teddy Pope of *The Deer Park*. *An American Dream* reveals Mailer's increased revulsion from all kinds of sexuality that are, in the literal sense of the word, degenerate, that express what he takes to be the decreative impulse, the turn toward death in American society. I cannot therefore recognize the novel described by most of the reviewers, especially the three already mentioned, claiming as they do that murder for Rojack is merely a sexual stimulant or that he isn't made to bear any responsibility for the death of his wife.

THE MORAL problem of Rojack as a murderer unpunished by law and as a sexualist who finds murder exciting is confronted by Mailer in the opening pages, where any reader might also confront it who is able to see what is going on in the passages describing the hero's killing of four Germans in World War II. It is therefore scarcely understandable that Mr. Rahv can wonder how Rojack *could* know before the strangulation of his wife that murder "is never asexual." The first of the four killings strikes a note that will resound through all the subsequent action, and does so in metaphors that shape the action here and throughout the novel. This early on, Mailer establishes the connections necessary to the impersonal and historical meanings of his work, between personal neuroses and neuroses so much at work in public affairs as to give, in the very plot of the book, a license for familial as well as national killings. What is most gruesomely comic about the novel—a really brilliant twist of plot that to Mr. Epstein is "a shamelessly shab-

by *deus ex machina*"—is that Rojack escapes prosecution for a personal crime, the murder of his wife, who is involved with spies, because, like his publicly awarded killing of Germans, the murder apparently fitted into the larger designs of international politics:

Years later I read *Zen and the Art of Archery* and understood the book. Because I did not throw the grenades on that night on the hill under the moon, *it* threw them, and *it* did a near-perfect job. The grenades went off somewhere between five and ten yards over each machine-gun, *blast, blast*, like a boxer's tattoo, one-two, and I was exploded in the butt from a piece of my own shrapnel, whacked with a delicious pain clean as a mistress's sharp teeth going "Yummy" in your rump, and then the barrel of my carbine swung around like a long fine antenna and pointed itself at the machine-gun hole on my right where a great bloody sweet German face, a healthy spoiled over-spoiled young beauty of a face, mother-love all over its making, possessor of that over-curved mouth which only great fat sweet young faggots can have when their rectum is tuned and entertained from adolescence on, came crying, sliding, smiling up over the edge of the hole, "Hello death!" blood and mud like the herald of sodomy upon his chest, and I pulled the trigger as if I were squeezing the softest breast of the softest pigeon which ever flew, still a woman's breast takes me now and then to the pigeon on that trigger, and the shot cracked like a birth twig across my palm, *whop!* and the round went in at the base of his nose and spread and I saw his face sucked in backward upon the gouge of the bullet, he looked suddenly like an old man, toothless, sly, reminiscent of lechery. Then he whimpered "*Mutter*," one yelp from the first memory of the womb, and down he went into his own blood just in time, timed like the interval in a shooting gallery, for the next was up, his hole-mate, a hard avenging specter with a pistol in his hand and one arm off, blown off, rectitude like a stringer of saliva across the straight edge of his lip, the straightest lip I ever saw, German-Protestant rectitude.

On inspection of such a passage

Miss Hardwick might want to rephrase her criticism of this novel as "poorly written" or of Mailer's style as "indolent." To get what these sentences have to offer, one must entirely put aside the assumption that Mailer is here writing out of any vulgarity of motive. He shows instead the most intense involvement in the words he uses and in the patterns of association among them. In that long middle sentence there is held in suspension, in a neutralizing balance, materials that would in shorter grammatical units—the kind familiar in popular literature of sexual crime—have a psychological luridness which Mailer is choosing here to avoid. Yes, he can remind us of James M. Cain, as Tom Wolfe was proud to observe in the *New York Book Week*, but only when he is on his way to other significances with which Mr. Wolfe's kind of block-buster criticism is incapable of dealing.

GIVEN the continuum of movement in that long, unbroken second sentence, none of the implications can be isolated; they are in an interdependent relation that is an image of Rojack's mind. And we are made to feel this even while the simple excitement of what is going on is itself sufficient warrant for the breathlessness of the narration. Perhaps Mailer planned this sentence, but I suspect it represents something better than planning, some saturation of the author's mind in what he wants to do that makes everything that spontaneously issues from it part of the life that the language has already produced. This fluidity of association is the most frightening aspect of the passage. Thus, though Rojack's dexterity of violence is first ascribed to a sort of magic, it is almost at once re-associated with the vanity of human skill in a sport, boxing, that has a strong component of homoeroticism. From this the mind of the hero quickly shifts to a heterosexual fantasy occasioned by his wound, the comparison being to a woman's affection for his rump, and from there his thoughts move more confidently to the German-soldier-as-faggot, whose "rectum is tuned." At this point sodomy gets connected with blood and mud, with death and with something like

bodily wastes, and then, from this extremity of explicitness, the drift is back again to a woman and her breast: the act of squeezing the trigger that kills the faggot is like squeezing a breast, the shot itself reminds him of childbirth (it feels like a "birth twig"), for Rojack the most creative and therefore worthy consequence of heterosexual intercourse. No wonder the cry of the German for "Mutter" seems dramatically powerful. And it is by the same token metaphorically relevant to the obsessive tension throughout the book between creative sexuality (the German's "one yelp" is "from the first memory of the womb") and sex that is murderous, associated with blood, mud, feces, and buggery. While the allusion that follows, to the dead soldier's "hole-mate" (and to his "rectitude"), doesn't require explication, it has the remarkable quality, like everything else in the passage, of being so utterly right in an innocently descriptive way that its metaphoric implications seem natural rather than a result of contrivance. This is of course what the passage as a whole, the book as a whole, wants to express: that the world in which we ordinarily participate simply is a version of our most neurotic imaginings.

With such a passage at the opening, the novel nears its end in the Waldorf Towers with a proposition from Deborah's father (he is also her first seducer) to Rojack, and possibly also to Ruta, the German maid with whom Rojack committed an athletic combination of buggery and ordinary copulation immediately following his murder of Deborah: "'Come on,' Kelly murmured, sitting on his throne, 'shall we get shitty?'" Though the perverse sexual desires that stir in Rojack and that he rejects are said to be "unfamiliar," they are, as we've just seen, hardly new, and Mailer at this point is coy and evasive. Nonetheless the scene, like other mad scenes in the book, has a credibility nearly astonishing, especially with accompanying evocations, always on the verge of being long-winded and ludicrous, of glamor or excessive to the point of comedy, of unimaginable wealth, and of power so beyond the control of a single man as to be super-

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natural. The mad scenes are endowed with the ramifications they often have in Elizabethan drama, with significances reaching into governments, into organizations—the Mafia, the CIA—and beyond into the metaphysics of power. Kelly is a man who “has strings everywhere,” and when he remarks that “there’s nothing but magic at the top,” he means that beyond the web of his influence is nothing but God and the Devil. His invitation to be “shitty” is one indication, within the metaphors of the book, of what might delicately be called the side he chooses to be on in the war of heaven and hell, and the effectively discreet hints of swishiness in his tone are another. From such “magic,” such manifest power associated with decreation—with sodomy and the odors of corruption that classically belong to the Devil—Rojack struggles to free himself. He doesn’t wholly succeed, his hope of freedom being in his love for Cherry, who does not live to bear the child he wants to have given her. But partly because of her he has, by the end, had what James meant by a second birth, and we last see him alone in search of an environment in which he can be that second self, traveling in the car he and Cherry had hoped to take together across the continent.

MUCH OF *An American Dream* is a grim saturnalia, under the influence not so much of the moon as of the craters of the moon to which Rojack feels suicidally drawn. As a saturnalia, the book manages to create justifications not merely for extraordinary behavior but also for attitudes that, taken strictly as attitudes, would be offensively moral, even hysterically so. The attitudes toward sex, for example, are strangely puritanical, lacking any acknowledgment of the power not of sexual dexterity merely, but of sexual tenderness and of pleasures within the capacities of ordinarily able-bodied persons. Too much is required of sex by Mailer, so that both its perverse and its creative aspects are melodramatized. What saves the book is a commitment to creativity invested not in sexual acts but in acts of writing, and not even on every page, of course, but on many of them. The paragraph

about killing the Germans is a paradigm in which a personal dream of creativity barely flickers within a publicly ordered nightmare of death. Necessarily this dream has no lasting embodiment in the story, not even in such a nucleus of a new society as Lawrence would have preserved in the marriage and isolation of lonely lovers, but the energy that derives from that dream gives velocity and life to the sentences in the book and the requisite courage for the exposure in the hero and in the author of all that is trying to kill it.

THE ANGLO-INDIAN THEME

AN AREA OF DARKNESS. By V. S. NAIPAUL. Macmillan. 281 pp. \$5.95.

Reviewed by JOHN MANDER

FROM THEIR duration, their intimacy, and intensity, an outsider might take Anglo-Indian relations to be one of the richest and most fascinating of historical themes. The British, after all, ruled India for some two centuries—sending out, not the riffraff of their cities, but many of their finest minds and wisest spirits. And India was not always unresponsive. The great Bengali reformers of the 19th century were equally determined to revive India’s traditions and to bring India the best in modern European thinking—which tended to mean Bentham and the two Mills (the elder Mill, of course, was one of the greatest of all British servants of India). Yet, by the end of the century, the mood had gone sour. It was in Bengal that the first anti-British terrorist campaign was to break out. In Kipling’s *Kim* there is an affection and respect for India and the ways of its natives—though not for the new, Western-educated “native”—that reflected the experience of many a British District Collector in the 1880’s. How much of this was left by the 1920’s may be judged from E. M. Forster’s *A Passage to India*—an accurate book in this (though not in every) respect. Again, the powerful impress of British institutions on contemporary India can mislead, as the Englishness of a Neh-

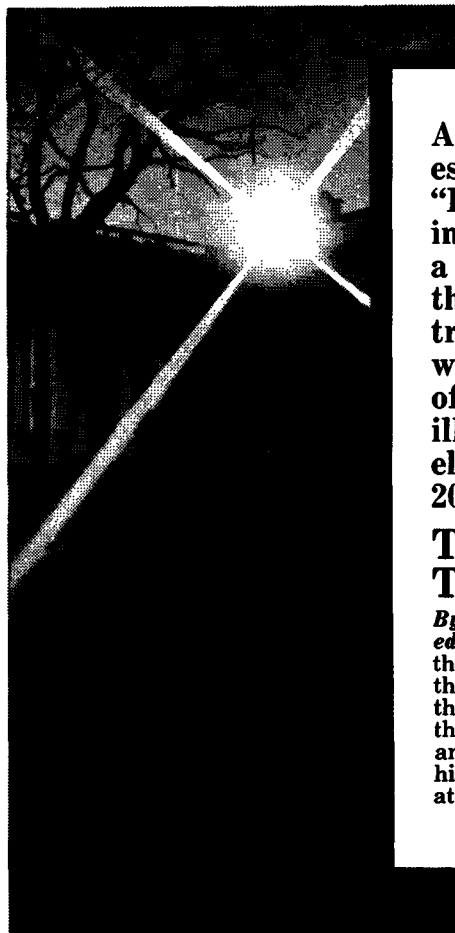
ru misled. Nehru’s successor—and his possible successors—are distinctly less English, less Western, distinctly more traditional, more Hindu. The course of Anglo-Indian relations has its bursts of grandeur; but on the whole it is a wretched story. It never was a marriage of true minds; to many it seems in retrospect more like a squalid *mésalliance*.

That this is a sad, indeed a tragic, outcome for both Britain and India hardly needs to be stressed. And there are wider implications. After all, if India and Britain, with their long historical intimacy, understood one another so little, what of those other, briefer colonial relationships between the West and the Third World? Was each bedeviled by the same mutual misunderstanding? Will the outcome, mutual resentment and repudiation, prove to be the same? Perhaps it is still too early to say. It is perfectly arguable that each colonial relationship should be considered for itself. What Oscar Mannoni, in his *Prospero and Caliban*, says of French-Malagassy relations may, or may not, be true of French-Guinean relations, or of relations between Australians and aborigines, Dutchmen and Indonesians. India, in other words, may be a special case: the tragedy of the Anglo-Indian encounter may prove nothing. My own inclinations are toward the position taken up by Mannoni: that there are useful generalizations to be made about the colonial relationship. *Prospero and Caliban* can never be made equal partners by political decree—if only because, in Mannoni’s psychological terms, *Prospero* has willed *Caliban* into being, and *Caliban* *Prospero*. What, even now, can be said with some assurance is that the act of independence does not put an end to the unequal relationship. Even the comparatively innocent American has to live with the psychological burden of colonialism bequeathed to him by his white brother-nations. Even for him, therefore, the question of whether or not India is a special case assumes some importance.

YET THIS potentially rich and fascinating field has been surprisingly little explored. In Britain, the

generation under forty knows almost nothing of India, and cares less. For those over forty who once lived and labored in India, the Raj is a fading dream: there are still strong sentimental ties, especially among military men, but they will hardly survive their generation. In India itself, Britain might appear to loom large: the image of the Raj is still powerful, perhaps more powerful in the glow of retrospective emulation than in the days of its actual glory. But the Britain the new Hindu Raj emulates is not the Britain of Harold Wilson, Kingsley Amis, and the Beatles. The living link has snapped. The Britain that is admired is an abstraction—a textbook model of jurisprudential wisdom, welfare-state economics, and parliamentary etiquette. Thus the Anglophilia of educated Indians is both embarrassingly flattering, and finally shallow—because it refers to an England that does not, and indeed never did, exist. A charming Indian lady once assured me over the lunch-table, after her guest had told a particularly scarifying tale of corruption in high places, "You will find this hard to understand, I believe, we know that such things cannot happen in your country." I did not like to disillusion her (this was about the time of the Profumo scandals). But in any case it would have done no good. What Indian editorials picked out was the fact that Mr. Profumo had actually got up in Parliament and *confessed*. How many Indian ministers, it was slyly suggested, would have been prepared to do a thing like that! And how much more, it was insinuated, would some of *our* ministers have to confess! How could one protest? Should one have insisted that these doings shed a rather murky light on the England of 1963? That would have been resented, and almost certainly not believed. These educated Indians were confident that they knew what the real England was: for them, whatever might happen, the real England would keep breaking through.

Since Independence there have been, I think, only three books which have done justice to the Anglo-Indian theme. The first, in point of time, was Nirad C. Chaud-



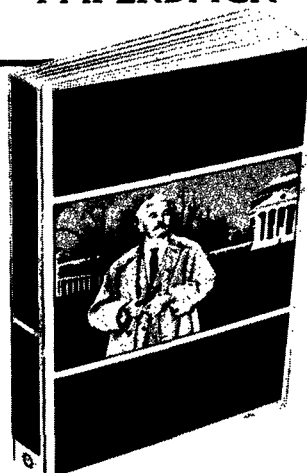
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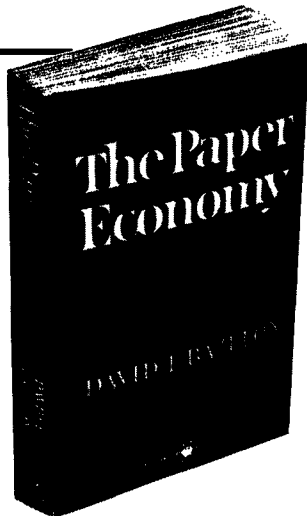
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huri's great *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, perhaps the best book in the English language ever written by an Indian. The second was *The Men Who Ruled India*, by Philip "Woodruff," an eloquent, erudite, romantic monument to the British administrators of imperial India—perhaps the most convincing apologia for imperialism (though its author, Philip Mason, is no "imperialist" in the contemporary, pejorative sense) that has ever been composed. V. S. Naipaul's new book, *An Area of Darkness*, deserves to take its place as the third in this pantheon. It differs from its predecessors, each written shortly after Independence, in that it records a contemporary India, the India of Nehru's last years, of the Sino-Indian border dispute. But it differs also in the quality of the author's involvement. Both Mr. Chaudhuri and Mr. Mason were children of the British Raj—indeed their books may prove, with Kipling's and Forster's, its most enduring monuments. Mr. Naipaul, too, is a child of British imperialism, but in rather more indirect fashion. He is the grandson of a Brahmin from the Benares region who went to Trinidad in the 19th century as an indentured laborer. But his education is British and he confesses that he lacks sympathy with much that is deeply Indian—he has no religious sense, no liking for metaphysics. Nevertheless, admirers of his earlier books must have hoped that he would one day write about India. They have been richly rewarded.

THE STRENGTHS of Mr. Naipaul's book lie, then, where one would expect them to lie—in his novelist's ear for talk, in his shrewd, observant eye for detail. The descriptions of that lakeside hotel in Kashmir where he stayed, of that first agonized encounter with the sights and smells of the Orient in Bombay and Alexandria, are done with a sureness that is equal to anything in his fiction. But it is above all Mr. Naipaul's account of his return to the ancestral village ("the Village of the Dubes") that seems certain of a high place in any anthology of English writing about India. Until the very end of his journey, the author seems to

cling to the illusion that somewhere, somehow, he will discover what it is that connects him, through his Brahmin forebears, with this sprawling, defecating, inchoate India of today. Arrived in the village, he finds the shrines erected by his grandfather, with money sent from Trinidad, still standing. But the village and its Brahmin community are not quite as he and his Trinidad family had been brought up to believe. A traditional welcome is laid on: but it is soon apparent that this prodigal's return is seen as a financial opportunity not to be missed. It is the final humiliation. The shameless beggary of India—as it must appear to a Westerner—could not be more cruelly brought home. Mr. Naipaul, who is nothing if not candid, admits that he panicked: from that moment he wanted only to get out of India as fast as he could.

In the best of his descriptive episodes Mr. Naipaul—and there is no higher praise—is not far inferior to Kipling. But the book has the defects of its virtues; it is interested largely in the immediacy, the accidents of life. Now that, in an Indian context, is very strange. For the Hindu sets little store by appearances—the world of *maya*. To the Hindu, essence is all. That is why most reportage, most descriptive writing in modern India, is so bad. In other words, the average Indian writer is weak precisely where Mr. Naipaul is strong. (Whether he is always strong where Mr. Naipaul is comparatively weak—in historical speculation, in philosophical contemplation—I would not care to say: though these gifts are certainly generously developed in Mr. Chaudhuri's books.) But it does seem that Mr. Naipaul is deaf to a good deal in the complex music of India—think, for instance, of the breathtaking aesthetic appeal of Satyajit Ray's films—because his own gifts lie in quite another direction. For all his Brahmin ancestry, Mr. Naipaul is very English in his sensibility (he is primarily a comic writer). In one sense, then, his book is intensely personal. It is the record of an attempt to clear that "area of darkness" which India, since childhood, had represented in the author's mind. The attempt succeeded, disastrously

well: the darkness of ignorance yielded to the more painful darkness of knowledge. In that sense, Mr. Naipaul's journey was justified: he will hardly need to go back. But there is more to it than that. It is not chance that Mr. Naipaul's personal Odyssey conforms to the pattern of so many other attempted explorations, so many other passages to India, both in its high expectations, and in its final humiliation and rejection. Indeed, it appears to echo the tragedy of the British Raj itself. Mr. Naipaul's book is the latest, but not the last, nail in the coffin of that brave, but ill-favored endeavor.

A SURFEIT OF TALK

Jews and Americans. By IRVING MALIN. *Southern Illinois University Press.* 193 pp. \$4.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE P. ELLIOTT

IN THIS BOOK Irving Malin is concerned with seven important contemporary poets and fiction writers who are both Jews and Americans and who deal explicitly with Jewishness: Karl Shapiro, Delmore Schwartz, Isaac Rosenfeld, Leslie Fiedler, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, and Philip Roth. Presumably it is because they do not deal directly and fully enough with their Jewishness that such writers as Hortense Calisher, Herbert Gold, Anthony Hecht, Stanley Kunitz, Norman Mailer, Arthur Miller, Howard Nemerov, Muriel Rukeyser, and Harvey Swados are left out. And surely the only reason to exclude Isaac Bashevis Singer is that his stories are not American enough.

The only one of the seven whom Malin seems to have included against his inclination and only because he fulfilled the requirements is Philip Roth. Malin's hostility toward Roth's writing is suggested in the second sentence ("Gentile readers are wildly enthusiastic about *Exodus*, Harry Golden, or *Goodbye, Columbus*") and persists almost without remission throughout, extending even to Roth's next novel, as yet unpublished and unannounced: "Roth's

problem continues. [His latest novel] will probably be as realistic as *Letting Go*. This loyalty to social realism is unfortunate." Malin also treats badly the two poets he has chosen. You would never guess from reading his book that Schwartz is one of the subtlest metricists and most delicate ironists of the age. As for Shapiro, that passionate, civilized, angry poet gets it in the neck for not being single-minded and conscious enough: "Shapiro is thus torn by the duality of guilt and joy in sex. In some unconscious way he associates sex with divinity. . . . Perhaps we can put his problem this way. He is so troubled by dualistic thinking that he cannot fully embrace Transcendence." Bellow and Malamud survive the Malin treatment in fairly good shape. To be sure, Bellow gets slapped a bit for making Henderson a Gentile; but even so, Malin finds the novel to be "infused with Hasidic joy": it passes. Malamud occasions much praise—not primarily for the legitimate reason that his stories are excellent but for the parochial one that they openly embody ideas of which Malin approves. Of the two central characters in *The Assistant*, Malin says: "they are Jewish—human."

There you have Malin's *chutzpah* unadorned: to be a real Jew is to be fully human. Malamud himself has seemed to take the same line, but at least he was playful about it even in the last sentence of the novel ("At Passover he became a Jew"), which is redeemed from total solemnity by the surprise of its placing. All the same, to us three billion or so *goyim*, that's much too close to implying that if you want to be fully human you'd better be a good Jew. (I take this as an equivalent to the Calvinist "you'd better be a good Christian if you want to go to Heaven" which I was raised on. Too exclusive! Spiritual snobbery!) Of the seven writers, Rosenfeld and Fiedler are the ones Malin treats most congenially. The reason for this is certainly not that their fictions are the best embodiment of his thesis; both these writers are strongest in their essays. The reason, I think, is that they are not only intelligently serious about the

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problem of being American-Jewish intellectuals but also overtly talk a lot about it.

The structure of Malin's book is quite mechanical. The introduction and postscript perform the usual textbookish functions, and between them are eight chapters each giving a theme or literary technique a supposedly Jewish slant. "Exile" and "fathers and sons" are naturals; "transcendence," "time," and "head and heart" are not so easy to encompass. "Parable" is all right; but that Schwartz's "irony" and Bellow's "fantasy" should be localized as Jewish is mere parochialism. (And what about Shapiro's nice Jewish iambs? Roth's elegant Jewish epiphanies?) Malin's literary criticism consists of the application of his eight topics to each writer in turn (fifty-six bouts in all) and of bald judgments insufficiently supported. The sentence embodying both of these techniques, and also asserting the major premise upon which the book totters, is this one: "I suggest here that when our writers are *directly* concerned with their Jewishness—reinterpreting the God of their ancestors—they produce powerful, sincere art; when they are not, they offer less intense, phony, or imperfect work." This is a just barely tenable position, though badly formulated, for a discussion of Malamud; shaky but possible for Rosenfeld, Fiedler, Bellow, and Roth; and, in my opinion, mostly useless for Shapiro and Schwartz. It is demonstrably not the case that Schwartz's "The Heavy Bear that Walks with Me" is a marvelous poem because the author is a Jew; it is nearly as obvious that, though Tommy Wilhelm's Jewishness is to some degree involved in *Seize the Day*, the story's excellence hardly depends upon his, and certainly not upon Bellow's, being a Jew. Malamud is the test case: he really is at his best only when writing about Jews, and his being a Jew has essentially modified his vision. But the unmistakable implication of Malin's book is that to a considerable extent it is Malamud's Jewishness that makes his fiction good, which is quite another matter. The last sentence of *Jews and Americans* (following but not com-

plementing an admirable, but in no way a Jewish, sentence of Fiedler's about Simone Weil) is provincialism rampant: "The Jewish Experience is great enough to accept our rebellious writers." Go ahead, try to rebel, see where it gets you; once a Jew always a Jew; even if you kill yourself trying to become a Christian as Weil did, all you're really doing is "reinterpreting the God of your ancestors. . . ." The difference between The Chosen People and The Jewish Experience is the difference between high religious awe and good-hearted dumpy complacency, between the Ark and Hadassah. To confuse them as Malin does is intellectually inadmissible.

AMERICANNESSE COMES OFF better than Jewishness because it hardly gets talked about in the book. Malin apparently assumes that his readers will know without much discussion what The American Experience consists of. As a concept, this one seems to me as flaccid as The Jewish Experience, though neither one will suffocate you unless you talk about it all the time. The instruction to be gained from this book is not the intended understanding of the distinctions and collisions between Americanness and Jewishness, but unintended examples of how not to *talk about* it. "Let's talk about our relationship": the best place for that line is in a Nichols and May satire, and the same goes for "Let's talk about our Jewishness and Americanness."

The subject is in itself valid and interesting, and, properly handled, could have produced a book worth reading; the trouble with the subject is that it cannot be discussed directly in rational, expository prose. Mysteries are real and important, but by their very nature they are indefinable. To talk about them too much in the wrong way is to pollute them, confuse comprehension of them, finally to dissipate them. In our time at least, the chief sin of intellectuals—not Jewish intellectuals, *intellectuals*—is that they won't let the mysteries alone, won't come at them indirectly, parabolically, silently, but talk about them all the time. A man of the late Isaac Rosenfeld's

unmistakable humaneness, wisdom, honesty, goodness (Jewishness too!)—it is painful to see him substitute Wilhelm Reich's talking about it for the thing itself, to see him write fables not with his eye on what happens but on what the fables mean, with the result that both story and meaning are vitiated. Literarily, Rosenfeld must be compared not with the great fabulist Kafka but with George Orwell, whose excellence was a matter of essays.

Intellectually, a danger of "talking about it" too much is that it dissipates—not ceases to exist but goes out of sight, needing to be searched for everywhere. For example, Fiedler talks about sex so much he sees it all over the place (he's not alone in this, only eminent). Similarly, Malin talks head-on about Jewishness so much that he sees it where it surely is not: discussing Shapiro's prose-poem "The Dirty Word," Malin refers to the magical fear of naming God as though it were peculiar to Jews.

Not that I can define Jewishness either. The COMMENTARY symposium on the subject (April 1961) persuaded me that the whole project of definition is a mistake, at least for intellectuals nowadays. The concept of Jewishness may help toward a definition of Schwartz, say, and it may be indispensable for a definition of Malamud, but it does not drench them, they are not soggy with it. My authority for such assertions is my own experience.

AFTER I GOT out of college in the first year of the War, I turned most of my education over to the *Partisan Review*, the Jewishness of which escaped my notice for years. I valued the intelligence of its essays, the excellence of its poetry and stories, and the intellectual excitement that permeated it; I also found its ideas, concerns, and attitudes important to me, worthy of attention. The *PR* writers, Jews or not, Americans or not, talked about social and literary issues, certain writers, psychological theories, Stalin's misdeeds, the nature of German fascism, new books. (In the late 40's and early 50's, the magazine began having symposia about such things as Jewish-

ness and Americanness and so on; the less said about all that the better.) It was in 1943 that I first came upon Saul Bellow when *PR* printed a section of *Dangling Man*, and it did not seem to me that Joseph's former Jewishness had much more to do with his plight than my former Quakerishness had to do with mine, which was quite similar to his—mostly American. My gratitude to Bellow was complex and deep: he helped define my situation at the time, and also showed me that out of my ordinary experience as a young intellectual, lively and intelligent fiction was possible. I was astonished, therefore, when four years ago I heard Philip Roth say that Bellow's fiction had had a greatly releasing effect upon him, in good part *because Bellow was Jewish*. I demurred, saying that it had affected me similarly without my having any notion Bellow was a Jew and that I would not have cared if I had known. Roth at first looked surprised by what I said, and then relieved.

In the first sentence of his book, Malin quotes Leslie Fiedler as saying that "in recent years Jewishness has become 'an eminently marketable commodity.'" (This is taken from Fiedler's perceptive review of Shapiro's *Poems of a Jew*.) Apparently Malin views this state of affairs with approval; Fiedler, I would guess, meant the statement as an insult to both the sellers and the buyers of this commodity; I know that I take the sentence as a true observation revealing a good deal about, among other things, the sleaziness of the term "Jewishness." Effectively, the concept has become intellectual glop resulting from non-believing Jews talking about what it means to be Americans descended from believing Jews. Malin further quotes Fiedler (from the same review) as saying that Jewishness is a "passport into the heart of Gentile culture." I have never been to Missoula, Montana, where Fiedler lived for many years, but I can say with considerable confidence that nowhere else in the country that I know of is Jewishness as such a passport to any identifiable variety of Gentile culture. A brilliant, charming celebrity who is Jewish has a passport



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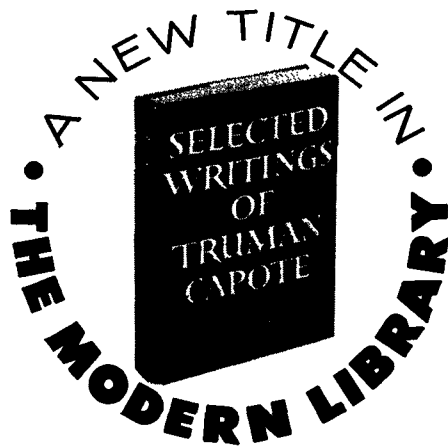
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into cultivated Gentile circles, all right, but it isn't his Jewishness that gives it to him. So far as my experience and judgment go, this proposition is exactly as invalid with "Jewish" and "Gentile" transposed as it is the way Fiedler wrote it, and for much the same reasons. Malamud was living in Corvallis, Oregon, along about that time, and he did not, from the evidence of *A New Life*, seem to find Jewishness-as-passport to be the case there either, any more than it is the case in the New York where his best stories take place. Maybe that is because he does not talk about *what Jewishness is* but tells stories about *what these people who are Jews did*, which is both a traditional (but not exclusively) Jewish way to figure forth a mystery and also the best literary one.

THE DECLINE OF REASON

FROM HEGEL TO NIETZSCHE: THE REVOLUTION IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY THOUGHT. By KARL LÖWITH. Translated by DAVID E. GREEN. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 447 pp. \$8.50.

Reviewed by
WERNER J. DANNHAUSER

THIS BOOK was completed in Japan in 1939 and first published in Switzerland in 1941. At that time its author—at present a distinguished teacher of philosophy at the University of Heidelberg—was in exile from Germany. The Nazis were then illustrating the possible and dreadful consequences of precisely that "revolution in 19th-century thought" which is described in Professor Löwith's study. But the book, which in large part deals with the emergence of nihilism and the concurrent critique of liberal democracy, is no less relevant now that fascism has been defeated. Having survived an attack from the Right, liberal democracy continues to be threatened by the Left, and nihilism in various guises continues to plague us. It is therefore good to have this book in English at last, especially since it is a very fine book indeed. Professor Löwith brings impos-

ing credentials to his task. As a former student of Husserl and assistant to Heidegger, he has been in direct contact with the two most important heirs of the 19th-century tradition of German philosophy. As a meticulous scholar, he shows himself completely familiar with both the thought and history of the period which he discusses. Dealing with matters inherently controversial, he manages to sustain a detachment that is far different from the mere absence of concern. It is difficult to pin a label on his views. One might call him a conservative if that term could be stripped of its current opprobrium; Professor Löwith's conservatism is of the type that does not, for instance, preclude either a fair presentation of Marx's thought, or a delicate appreciation of his philosophic gifts. As a historian of ideas, finally, Professor Löwith manages to transcend the methodological squabbles that afflict his discipline. His own approach is disarming; he seeks to understand the men he discusses on their own terms—that is, as they understood themselves. He begins by assuming that they know whereof they speak, and whenever possible he lets them speak for themselves. He is saved from the temptation to reduce intellectual history to biographical or psychological trivia because he knows a simple and a big thing: what is most interesting about a thinker is his thought.

The book resulting from the application of these considerable talents is dense, fascinating, and useful in various ways. On one level it resembles an ordinary history of 19th-century philosophy. It concentrates heavily on German thought, to be sure, but as there is much truth in the saying that since Kant philosophy has spoken German, it is easy to justify such a limitation. In the first half of the book the focus is on individual thinkers and their affinities or hostilities to each other. This part is especially useful in informing the reader about the various philosophical camps that emerged after Hegel's death. I have never, for instance, read a clearer exposition of that murky phenomenon, the split between right-wing (or old) Hegelians and left-wing (or young)

Hegelians. In addition, the first half of the book has the merit of doing justice to several thinkers (Bruno Bauer and Ludwig Feuerbach, for example) who at present are known mainly—and unfairly—through the polemics of Marx and Engels.

The second half of the book is organized around the main themes of 19th-century thought. Professor Löwith devotes a chapter each to the concepts of society, education, work, Christianity, and humanity or humanism, showing how all of them were gradually transformed from ideals to problems. For example, work was first viewed as man's way of dominating nature, and therefore a great good, and later—by Marx—as man's alienation from himself, and therefore bad. Similarly, Hegel used the word "humanity" as a term of approbation; Nietzsche, however, spoke of the "human, all-too human" and of the need for a superman who could overcome his own humanity.

Throughout the book, Professor Löwith succeeds in his stated intention of "bringing accurately to life the epoch which starts with Hegel and ends with Nietzsche." He is not, however, primarily concerned with writing a conventional and chronological intellectual history, but rather with articulating a specific movement of thought, with tracing "the deadly consistency of philosophical development since Hegel." That development is a movement away from Hegel's grand synthesis which saw the world as a cosmos, an ordered place in which man occupies a central niche, toward Nietzsche's view of the world as chaos, a meaningless place in which man's fundamental experience is one of anguish and pain. In seeking to determine what happened, Professor Löwith begins by subjecting Hegel's all-inclusive philosophical system to a sympathetic but critical analysis. Hegel emerges as the grand mediator between opposites who attempted, and perhaps was able, to abolish all tensions between faith and reason, objectivity and subjectivity, the individual and the state, theory and practice. His successors, especially Marx and Kierkegaard, ripped asunder what Hegel had joined. By the time of Nietzsche, Hegel's



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world-view, along with just about every world-view of the past, was thought to be discredited, so that Nietzsche was forced into that attempt at reconstruction which ended in his madness.

The above is *what* happened, according to Professor Löwith. To ask *why* it happened is to ask, as he also does, whether there was anything in Hegel's thought which was responsible for the later and fateful developments. One should realize at the outset that Hegel was

not necessarily proved wrong by those thinkers who criticized him. It might be the case—and Professor Löwith is willing to entertain it—that Hegel was simply a greater man than anyone who came after him. In other words, Hegel might have been able to think on a plane where all opposites were really reconciled, a plane which it was impossible for his successors to reach. Indeed, according to Professor Löwith, what comes after Hegel “cannot be compared for breadth of

vision and energy of accomplishment; it is exaggerated or exhausted, extreme or mediocre, and more promising than productive.”

At a time when what most people think they know about Hegel is that he identified the Prussian State with God, it is refreshing to find his philosophy taken so seriously. But this does not prevent Professor Löwith from looking very closely at the nature of Hegel's syntheses in order to discover the problems they revealed—or concealed. And there were, of course, problems. Thus, Hegel might reconcile Christianity with just about everything else, but the result was an “amorphous” Christianity, a faith so secularized and pallid that Kierkegaard could echo Pascal, who against earlier reconciliations had insisted that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was not the God of the Philosophers.

The greatest difficulty of all was posed by a single, cryptic sentence in which Hegel expressed the epitome of his philosophy: “Whatever is rational is real, and whatever is real is rational.” This statement affirms that reason is capable of understanding the world, and that the world grasped by reason is somehow the embodiment of rationality. It is a demonstrably idiotic statement unless one thinks in terms of a hierarchy of realities, and Hegel did, of course, distinguish between that which exists accidentally and that which is truly real. But one may wonder whether he always applied this distinction correctly when speaking about his immediate environment. In any case, his successors could not agree about what was truly real in the world they encountered. One could argue, as did the right-wing Hegelians, that the monarchies of Europe were real, and therefore rational. Or, one could insist along with Marx that existing social conditions were patently irrational and therefore, not being truly real, ripe for abolition. Thus Marx denied that Hegel had succeeded in reconciling reason with reality; moreover, he denied that philosophy was capable of doing so. He came to see philosophy as the irrelevant attempt to understand the world: the problem was not to understand but to change it. Kierkegaard, too,

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albeit in a different way, challenged philosophy's competence to come to grips with reality. And again: what Hegel had joined was ripped asunder.

As modern men we are likely to be convinced by these strictures against Hegel. It is difficult to think of the world as rational when one remembers Hitler and Stalin. Furthermore, it is difficult to take seriously Hegel's claim to have found the final truth; it is easier to dismiss him as a dogmatist. We deny that eternal truths can be found; we even tend to deny that they exist and are therefore led to dismiss the very quest for them as futile, even though that quest be free of dogmatism. In other words, we not only reject Hegel; we no longer believe in the possibility of philosophy as such. Our rejection is based on our view that one's philosophy is the product of the times and is steeped in the limitations, the prejudices, and the preoccupations of one's time. We reject the claims of philosophy in general, and of Hegel in particular, on the basis of our historical consciousness.

THERE is a consummate irony in this, for we are using a kind of popularized Hegelianism to discredit Hegel. It was, after all, Hegel who brought the idea of a philosophy of history to maturity; it was Hegel who maintained that the philosopher was the son of his time; it was Hegel who couched his own philosophizing in historical terms. He did not, to be sure, view his own thought as historically ephemeral, but maintained that in his time history had reached an absolute moment when true understanding of the world became possible. History had culminated in rationality: on the one hand there was the rational world that the French Revolution had inaugurated; and, on the other hand, there was the mind to comprehend it fully—Hegel's own. Marx can be said to have retained Hegel's historical consciousness while denying that rationality had triumphed in the world. Hegel's absolute moment was postponed, so far as reality was concerned, until "after the Revolution." So far as reason was concerned, the absolute moment

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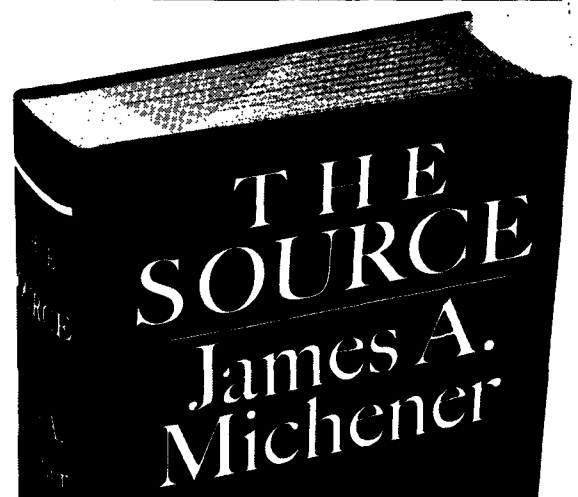
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was here in the form of Marx's teaching.

Nietzsche, unlike Marx, never acknowledged his debt to Hegel and he was indeed more critical of the latter than Marx had been. Against Hegel's assertion that history was a rational process, Nietzsche insisted that it was full of "blindness, madness, and injustice," and he therefore denied the possibility of its culmination in a rational world-order. Yet Nietzsche, too, was proud of the century's historical consciousness, and Nietzsche, too, thought of his own philosophy as occupying a privileged or absolute moment, a "great noon" when it becomes possible to see the world as it is. His successors were to deny that history could be transcended even in theory, and to dismiss Nietzsche's yearning for eternity and eternal truth as the last gasp of discredited metaphysical speculations. The consequence was nihilism—as Nietzsche had foreseen—for a world in which man is the prisoner of a meaningless historical process is a meaningless world, a world in which nothing is true and everything permitted, a world in which man's will has no objective goals to will, a world in which those strongest of will are therefore likely to will nothingness.

That, in crude caricature, is the "development" which is traced by Professor Löwith. Was it a necessary development? Professor Löwith suggests it was necessary only on the basis of Hegel's philosophy. He does not, however, so much criticize Hegel directly as confront Hegel's philosophy with the thought of the latter's great contemporary, Goethe, who emerges as the hero of the book. The place occupied by history in Hegel's thought is taken by Nature in the thought of Goethe; instead of a systematic philosophy such as Hegel's, Goethe offers a series of unconstrained, remarkably free, and amazingly deep insights. But Goethe, alas, remained an accident in German history, as Nietzsche was to say.

One can learn to love Goethe by reading this book. One is not, however, told whether Goethe was right, whether he can serve as our mentor today. Professor Löwith does not show us whether and how

we can go beyond the development he has outlined. One might say that he has not written a book of philosophy but a book of the history of philosophy. One might even say that his writing of a history of philosophy betrays an immense indebtedness to Hegel and thus cannot offer us any liberation from the fateful legacy of the tradition that developed from Hegel. But one should also realize that he raises questions of the most fundamental kind. While he does not present us with answers, he does clarify those questions. And in a very old-fashioned way, as old as Socrates, the clarification of questions can be seen as one of the abiding tasks of philosophy.

ACTION CRITICISM

THE ANXIOUS OBJECT: ART TODAY AND ITS AUDIENCE. By HAROLD ROSENBERG. *Horizon*. 272 pp. \$7.50.

Reviewed by HENRY DAVID AIKEN

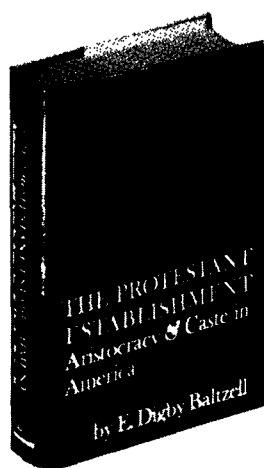
NOT LEAST AMONG Mr. Rosenberg's manifest powers as a chronicler, front-runner, and occasional monitor to "the art establishment," as he calls it, is his talent as a slogan maker. The title of his new book is a case in point. Despite the affluence and fame of its leading figures, the art establishment is so unsure of its directions, its values, and its pecking-orders that the paintings themselves appear to have grown uneasy; they are warily self-assertive, like little children, yet worried lest they appear too different and half-embarrassed by the importance which is attached to them. And why should it be otherwise? Were contemporary objects of art simply to enjoy themselves, as those of Renoir and Matisse used to do, we would have reason to doubt their essential contemporaneity. Only one part of the establishment seems to be having a thoroughly good time of it, namely Mr. Rosenberg himself. Under the force of his enthusiasm, the very names "Robert Indiana," "Elaine de Kooning," "Ad Reinhardt," "Andy Warhol," "Mark Rothko," and the rest resound like a roll-call of the states in the poetry of Whit-

man. In fact Mr. Rosenberg often gives the impression that he would rather have been present at the composition of Arshile Gorky's "The Diary of a Seducer" than at the creation of the world; one wonders, indeed, whether he could really tell the difference.

Yet on closer look most of Mr. Rosenberg's enthusiasm appears to be merely a function of his care-free, aggressively unkempt rhetoric. His underlying attitudes toward the art establishment are ambivalent, shifting, often obscure. This, let me emphasize, should not be ascribed to any guile on his part: he is perhaps the last man to hedge his critical bets or deliberately to wrap himself up in seven veils of protective mystification. His confusions and contradictions, where they exist, are genuine, and they reflect—perhaps too faithfully—his sense of how it really is to live and have one's being within "the tradition of the new." Again and again Rosenberg's impulse to admire (an indispensable trait in any critic) is frustrated by something that sets his teeth on edge, just as his regard for the role or the personality of an artist is offset by a sense of the transitoriness of his art. Though the casual reader may think that Rosenberg wholly enjoys the anxious object, his only consistent pleasure comes from his own lively description of it.

When Rosenberg finally and ever so deliberately goes out on a limb, as he does for some of the work of Hans Hofmann or as he does in his brave, illuminating essay on the later paintings of Willem de Kooning, the strength of his esteem is all the more impressive. And this is as it should be. For if Rosenberg's commitment to the artist's work is rarely so spontaneous and full, this is one sign that he is performing his function in relation to the "tradition of the new." Were he not "anxious" himself, were he ready to give a happy nod to every wretched fraud who has wormed his way into the art establishment, he would of course be abdicating his role as critic. I do not agree at all with Mr. John Simon's recent wholesale condemnation in the *New York Times Book Review* of Rosenberg's work as critic and writer, as well as of the entire movement

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of abstract art, with which he has so much associated himself. No doubt there are as few masters and masterpieces in our time as in any other. But for all his studied animation, Rosenberg is quite as well aware of the fact as Simon is. If he frequently gives encouragement to artists whose position in art history is still insecure or who as yet have no position in it at all, this is partly because he believes that to delay a positive verdict on the art of today is to miss one's chance to help toward establishing it within the history of art. The work that has already found its way into art history is already secure; to it, in a sense, the critics' approval (or disapproval) is irrelevant. Only the really new work can make use of the critic's judgment, and only in relation to it, in Rosenberg's view, does the critic have an essential role to play.

In our time, according to Rosenberg, the genuine critic does not attempt to "place" the individual talent within the whole history of art—in his view, an inevitably bogus undertaking—but on the contrary tries "to relate . . . [it] to the

novelty in the art that preceded . . . [it]." (Rosenberg's italics.) Here, in fact, lies Rosenberg's distinctive point of departure as a critic of contemporary art. This concern with novelty has to be borne in mind if one is to understand his overwrought attack upon Clement Greenberg, who maintains that there is nothing "essential in . . . [action painting] that cannot be shown to have evolved out of either Cubism or Impressionism," and that there is nothing "essential in Cubism or Impressionism whose development could not be traced back to Giotto and Masaccio and Giorgione and Titian." This "burlesque of art history," as Rosenberg calls it, arouses his ire precisely because it is not without its own element of truth. But what matters here is that Rosenberg's whole sensibility turns on his perception of, or belief in, the necessity of "making it new" and his accompanying sense of the terrible possibilities of shipwreck, even for great talents, implicit in that necessity. And this explains the peculiar tensions inherent in his criticism. No one knows better than he that

they who live by novelty may also die by novelty. And no one has been readier to pay the price in his own work.

IT IS CHARACTERISTIC of Rosenberg that he refers in his title to "art today," not to "anti-art," or "non-art." Like the existentialists, Mr. Rosenberg (who, let me add, knows better what metaphysics and ideology are than some professional practitioners and critics of these genres), believes that "existence comes before essence." He is never prepared to sacrifice a significant new existence for the sake of an ancient essence, bowed with critical and historical honors. Despite his disdain for the "art-historical" point of view, however, Rosenberg has not abandoned the conception of the work of art. And he reserves the word "artist," which remains for him a true honorific, for men who—whatever their affluence or influence—are always precariously placed within their cultures and who, in virtue of that fact, hold up a deeply revealing mirror to their civilization. One also senses the esteem for the cultural significance of art in his contemptuous remarks upon the non- or pseudo-artist who uses his craft merely to make a name for himself. One can share his attitude while deploring his choice of a negative example, namely Robert Motherwell, a serious artist whose work can genuinely please when seen. Motherwell, it should be added, is himself a gifted and courageous explicator of contemporary painting who shares many of Mr. Rosenberg's own distinctive powers, including that of being a philosopher of art.

In a way, perhaps, Rosenberg takes the artist and his role too seriously. As in the case of his carefully wrought and informed pieces on Hofmann, he is sufficiently clear in principle about the distinction between the "ideological" (a favorite word of Rosenberg's) line taken by the artist as teacher or as talker and the felt quality of his pictures, including their ideological quality. But in practice he sometimes confuses the intention that guides and directly shows itself in the artist's brush work with the artist's explanations of that intention. Granted that the intelligent, self-con-

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scious artist may be allowed privileged access to the meaning of his work, or at least to his intention, it by no means always follows that every artist is in a position to make good use of the privilege. An artist, as the music critic Tovey once remarked in the case of Beethoven, has authority only in regard to those matters over which he has control and insight. Many artists seem to go to pieces when they are not in their studios, and some muster concentration, honesty, and depth of feeling only upon taking their brushes into their hands. Unlike the poet, who is a man of words par excellence, the painter, like the musician, frequently has no control over or respect for words, and in consequence simply talks guff when he talks about his art. The artist who possesses Barnett Newman's ability to create a meaningful verbal ambience for his paintings is rare; rarer still is the artist who has anything relevant to say about painting as an art. Rosenberg is absolutely right to take Newman's words, as well as his paintings, seriously. But the pretentious chatter of Ad Reinhardt seems to me an intrusive irrelevance which merely underlines the vacuity of his thought as an artist. Reinhardt may be "the intellectual pivot of the new art offered as a replacement for Abstract Expressionism," as Rosenberg claims, but his words have only the net effect of destroying any vestigial possibility of appreciating what Rosenberg calls his "block-shaped cross marking the tomb of modern art." In short, Rosenberg does not sufficiently distinguish the verbal hostility of Reinhardt to other artists from the painterly hostility (if that is the right word here) of Reinhardt's dreary pictures to whatever it is that they may be supposed to be snapping at. Here, as in some other instances, the "artist" seems scarcely worth the careful attention Rosenberg bestows upon him.

THE trouble with *The Anxious Object*, as well as with a number of the articles contained in it, is that it is far too miscellaneous. The best part—which deals in separate, or pairs of, essays with Gorky, de Kooning, Hofmann, Steinberg, Newman, Johns—is usually con-

centrated, sometimes illuminating, occasionally exciting. I was genuinely instructed, for example, by Rosenberg's discussion of the way in which Jasper Johns's works epitomize his view that "*what makes an object into art is its introduction into the art context.*" In the past I have been puzzled by Johns's work, but Rosenberg disposes me to go back again, perhaps to find there fresh intimations, not of the intrusion of extraneous things into the world of a painting, but of the incomparable power of the imaginative artist to put anything at all into that "mighty being," the work of art, and make it live. Similarly, I found "Barnett Newman: The Living Rectangle" not only wonderfully witty and funny—thanks in part to Newman himself—but also instructive about his art. Once I was stumped by Mondrian, the point of whose paintings, as it happens, Robert Motherwell helped me to see. Now

Rosenberg enables me to do the same with Newman. In other parts of Rosenberg's book, however, there is too often a meaningless dropping of names, and a restless and relentless mentioning of objects which might be informative in a weekly magazine article that aims to call one's attention to the contents of a passing show, but which is useless and infuriating when one finds it, long after the fact, in a book. What use can the reader now make of remarks about Sally Hazelet Drummond's "careful overall diffusions of colored dots that drift toward centers of density"? Or what is one to do with references to Robert Indiana, "an adaptor of signs and stencil markings" or Chryssa, "a more resourceful sign maker and manipulator of patterns, imprints, and letterings," and so on and so on into the night? A good many of these articles appeared originally in the *New Yorker* and Rosenberg occasionally shows the strain of the

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New Yorker "manner" in his writing about the art world: the obligation to make it lively, to be casually "in the know," and to treat all the oddments that prop up the art-worldly scene as worthy of remark, if not regard.

Mr. Rosenberg is also more impressed than I am by the fact that in abstract expressionism, American painting has acquired for the first time an authentic and independent style of its own and, in so doing, has become a primary influence upon contemporary art everywhere. He himself realizes that within the tradition of the new, such an influence almost necessarily results in a new academism. And, at least so far as this country is concerned, I take it that he does not expect much more from the abstract expressionists as a school, whatever may still be achieved by some of its original members. Why then should he suppose that anything valuable will come of its influence or its "vocabulary" elsewhere? On the contrary, if his own sometimes hilarious but generally depressing account of the Sixth Biennial at Sao Paulo is anything to go by, the "global" art of abstract expressionism is a dead art. My own impression, however, is that global art of any sort is dead art, despite the airplane and the evil spread of the art establishment into the upper reaches of the Amazon or along the marches of central Italy. On this point, I am bound to say, Rosenberg becomes at once chauvinistic and fatuous. What is want-

ed, I should judge, is someone—in the true tradition of the new—who will quietly turn his back on the establishment and once more make it new by painting wholly to please himself.

MEANWHILE, whatever one may think of pop- and gag-art, the place of action painting generally within the art history of the 20th century seems quite secure. And this security owes a good deal to the daring, the perceptiveness, and the literary skill of Mr. Rosenberg himself. He may not be pleased by the comparison, but it seems to me that his notion of "action" in recent painting plays a critical role not unlike that played by the notion of "tactile values" which Bernard Berenson used to define the greatest Florentine paintings. Like Rosenberg, Berenson tended to make a fetish of his own insight. Nonetheless he helped generations to see values in the frescoes of Giotto and Masaccio that are not in fact visible to the naked eye but rather to the imagination. Rosenberg has done an analogous thing in the case of abstract art. By invoking the whole range of our kinesthetic, motor, and even thermal associations, he has helped us to "see" in the abstract painting what less gifted observers would have been unable to perceive by themselves. And more than this, by a great critical stroke he has suggested that an abstract painting can and should be viewed, as it were, under the form, not just of movement, but of *action*: not as a series of accidental pulls

and hauls, of jerks and dabs and drips, but as something *done*—acted out and acted upon—and hence something which is not merely a manifestation of "behavior" (in the thin contemporary psychological sense of the word). Viewing the abstract painting under the form of action is therefore to view it not merely as a neutral "aesthetic object," but as a human work of art—that is to say, as something which, while it has no ulterior purpose to fulfill, is nonetheless, as Kant pointed out, essentially purposive.

ONCE one is set to view contemporary art in this way, a sense of communication and of communion becomes possible as it would not were one to view such art as one does the movements of a swarm of bees or a gust of wind. Here, in other words, is an essentially, painfully human *performance*. One doesn't have to like it, but one has to recognize it as something done by men not unlike oneself, living in and helping to form and to fashion the moving world to which all of us belong. To feel this is a necessary condition of entering into the world of modern painting, and Rosenberg through this concept and through his often immensely imaginative applications of it is thereby our benefactor. In thus enlarging our sensibilities, he also helps to provide the world of art with a less anxious audience, which is the one great boon any critic can bestow upon the artist himself.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

RICHARD POIRIER, a new contributor, is chairman of the English Department at Rutgers University and an editor of *Partisan Review*.

JOHN MANDER is on the staff of *Encounter*. His most recent book is *Great Britain or Little England?*

GEORGE P. ELLIOTT's new novel, *In The World*, will be published this fall by Random House.

WERNER J. DANNHAUSER is an editor of *COMMENTARY*.

HENRY DAVID AIKEN has recently been appointed professor of philosophy at Brandeis University.

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